सत्यमेव जयते

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME IX

MADRAS

PART VI

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

29. SIRUMALAI

P. K. NAMBIAR
OF THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS, MADRAS
AND
A. K. VIJAYA BHANU M.A., B.L.
OF THE MADRAS CIVIL SERVICE
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS, MADRAS.

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(Census Report—Vol. No. IX will relate to Madras only. Under this series will be issued the following publications.)

Part	* I—A(i)	...	General Report (Chapters I to VII)
	I—A(ii)	...	„ (Chapters VIII to XIV)
	* I—B(i)	...	Demography and Vital Statistics (Report)
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	* V—B	...	Ethnographic Notes on Scheduled Tribes
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Part	* VI	...	Village Survey Monographs (40 Nos.)
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	* A	...	Handlooms in Madras State
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	* C	...	Slums of Madras City
	* D	...	Temples of Madras State (5 Volumes)
	* E	...	Physically Handicapped of Madras State
	F	...	Family Planning Attitudes: A Survey
Part	XII	...	Languages of Madras State

***Already published*

FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this sub-continent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades, the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole state in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive; the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type-studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows:

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, e.g., fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry-workers etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500–700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication, such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus, there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield; and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census conference in September 1959, the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities; festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March, 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in September, 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, movable and immovable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the Census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum [May 1961], Darjeeling and Srinagar [June 1961], restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possiblities that a close analysis of statistics offered and also because the 'Consanguinity' Schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as inter-related processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land-reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December, 1961, when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve: to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this Monograph have been printed in an Appendix.

New Delhi,
July 30, 1964.

A. MITRA,
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

An interesting feature of 1961 Census is the preparation of Village Survey Monographs. Sri. A. Mitra, Registrar General, has, in his foreword, given the reader a general background of the survey. Forty villages for the survey have been selected in Madras State, and this Monograph on Sirumalai is the twenty-ninth of the series.

Sirumalai village is perched on the hills of Sirumalai in Madurai District. As is to be expected, planting of coffee and banana is its main source of livelihood. Its multiethnic population includes a primitive tribe of Palliyans who still lead a nomadic life. Though isolated the impact of outside influence is slowly felt by the village.

Sarvashri S. Dhanasekharan, Tabulation Officer and J. Thomas Machado, Research Assistant of this Office conducted the field study of this village and prepared the preliminary report. Sri. A. K. Vijaya Bhanu, my Deputy Superintendent prepared the final report, which after editing, is presented to the reader.

P. K. NAMBIAR

LIST OF VILLAGES SELECTED FOR THE SURVEY

1.	Ayyangarkulam*	...	Chingleput District
2.	Sunnambukulam*	...	„
3.	Lakkinayakkanpatti	...	South Arcot District
4.	Thadagam*	...	„
5.	Arkavadi*	...	„
6.	Hasanamapettai	...	North Arcot District
7.	Paravakkal	...	„
8.	Arkasanahalli*	...	Salem District
9.	Kanakagiri*	...	„
10.	Pappanaickenpatti*	...	„
11.	Aladipatti*	...	„
12.	Iswaramoorthipalayam*	...	„
13.	Kumbalam	...	„
14.	Nellithorai*	...	Coimbatore District
15.	Hallimoyar*	...	Nilgiris District
16.	Kinnakorai	...	„
17.	Vilpatti*	...	Madurai District
18.	Sirumalai**	...	„
19.	Periyur*	...	„
20.	Thiruvalavayanallur	...	„
21.	Thenbaranadu*	...	Tiruchirapalli District
22.	Thiruvellarai*	...	„
23.	Ariyur	...	„
24.	Kadambangudi*	...	Thanjavur District
25.	Vilangulam*	...	„
26.	Kunnalur*	...	„
27.	Kodiakkarai	...	„
28.	Golwarpatti*	...	Ramanathapuram District
29.	Visavanoor*	...	„
30.	Athangarai*	...	„
31.	Ravanasamudram*	...	Tirunelveli District
32.	Pudukulam*	...	„
33.	Alwarkarkulam	...	„
34.	Kilakottai*	...	„
35.	Odaimarichan	...	„
36.	Kuvalaikanni	...	„
37.	Koottumangalam*	...	Kanyakumari District
38.	Kadathuchery*	...	„
39.	Kottuthalazhamkulam*	...	„
40.	Kadukkara*	...	„

**Already published*

***The present volume (No. 29 of the series)*

VILLAGE SURVEY REPORT

ON

SIRUMALAI

Field Study	...	...	S. DHANASEKARAN, M.A., *Tabulation Officer*
& First Report			J. THOMAS MACHADO M.A., *Research Assistant*
Photographs:	...	...	N. D. RAJAN, *Photographer*
Maps:	...	...	A. RAJAMANI, *Draughtsman*
Sketches:	...	...	A. RAMADOSS, *Artist*

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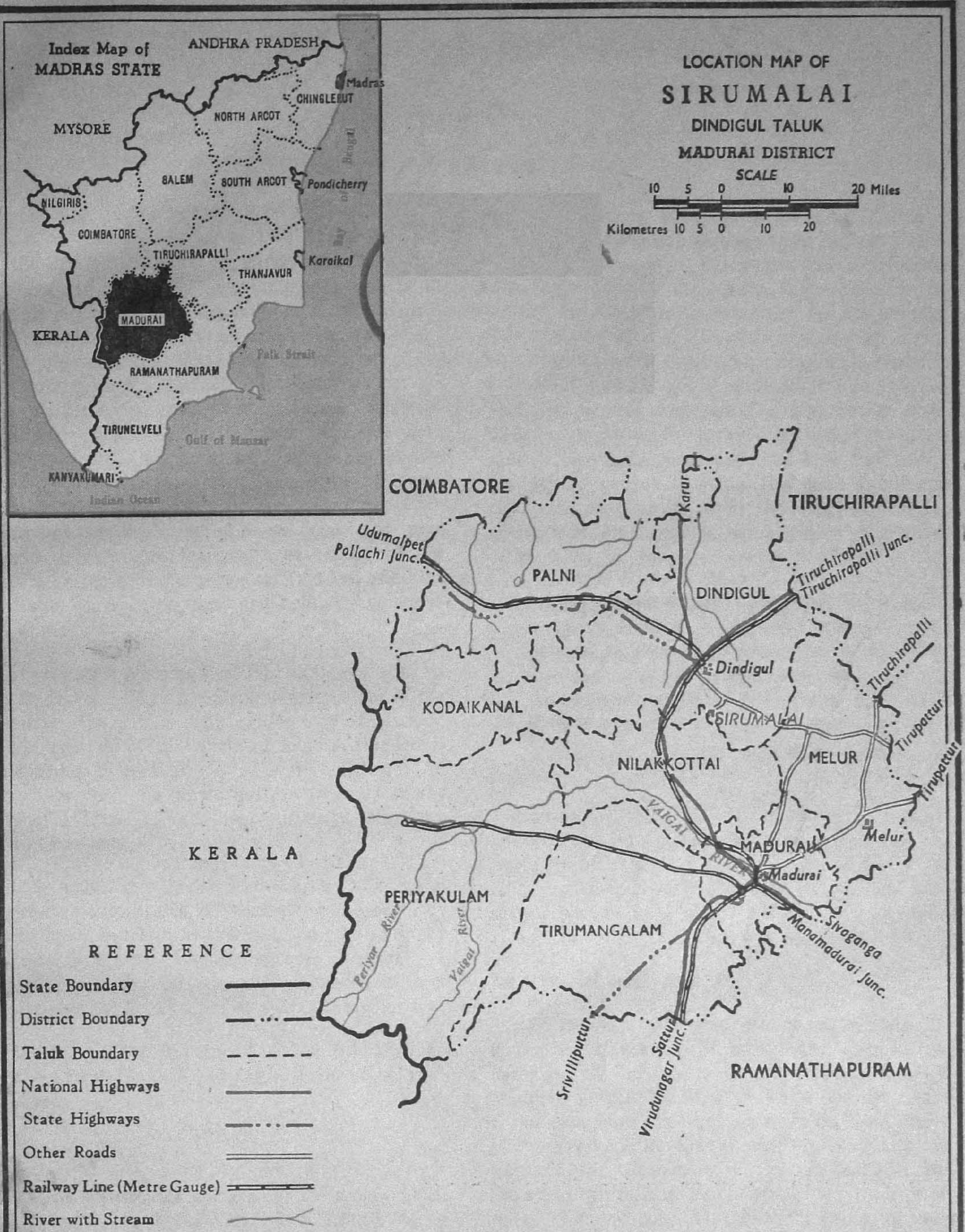
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10 5 0 10 20 Miles
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Karur
PALNI
DINDIGUL
Tiruchirapalli
Tiruchirapalli Junc.
Dindigul
Tiruchirapalli
KODAIKANAL
SIRUMALAI
Tirupattur
NILAKKOTTAI
MELUR
Tirupattur
VAIGAI
RIVER
MADURAI
Melur
Madurai
KERALA
PERIYAKULAM
Periyar River
Vaigai River
TIRUMANGALAM
Sivaganga
Manamadurai Junc.
Srivilliputtur
Sattur
Virudunagar Junc.
RAMANATHAPURAM
REFERENCE
State Boundary
District Boundary
Taluk Boundary
National Highways
State Highways
Other Roads
Railway Line (Metre Gauge)
River with Stream
CENSUS - MADRAS

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

Introduction

ABOUT 300 MILES SOUTH OF MADRAS CITY lies Madurai, the second largest city of the State. An ancient metropolis of the powerful Pandya kingdom of Tamilnad whose fame has been celebrated in undying prose and verse, it has been the traditional home of Tamil culture. It had been a renowned seat of learning for centuries. Literature praises it as the capital of the Pandyan Empire, which had an extensive sea-borne trade with Greece and Rome. For the last 2,500 years, it has been the local centre of Dravidian culture and civilization and has been called by notable foreigners as the *Athens of South India.* The great Italian globe-trotter Marcopolo has described the Pandya kingdom of those days as "the best of all the Indies and indeed the finest and noblest Province in the world".

At present it is a renowned Pilgrim Centre that attracts devotees from the farthest extremities of the country. The patron deity of the City of Madurai and indeed that of the whole of Pandya kingdom is the Goddess Meenakshi (the fish-eyed Goddess). All round the year, the temple has festivals and so the City of Madurai is, not inappropriately, called the City of Festivals.

This famous city is the head-quarters of Madurai Revenue district, which is bounded on the north by Coimbatore and Tiruchy districts, on the south by Kerala State and Ramanathapuram district, on the east by Tiruchy and Ramanathapuram districts and on the west by Kerala State and Coimbatore district.

The district lies between 90° 30′ and 10° 50′ of the North Latitude and 77° 10′ and 78° 30′ of the East Latitude.

Hills

The district has many mountain ranges which ld to its beauty. The Palani Hills which run almost arallel to the Western Ghats, nearly north to south, eparate the district from Kerala State. The Palani Hills are divided into two regions—the Upper Palanis and the Lower Palanis. The famous Kodaikanal, one of the best summer resorts in South India is situated on the Upper Palanis. Varshanad and Andipatti Hills are the other important hill ranges that run parallel to the Palanis. On the eastern side of the district are the Sirumalai, the Karandamalai, the Alagarmalai, the Natham and Aliar Hills. Sirumalai which means 'small mountain' is situated at a crow-flight distance of about 16 miles north of Madurai. Its highest peak rises a little over 4,400′ above the sea level. Sirumalai is famous for the rich varieties of its plantains and the name Sirumalai dates back to a period beyond the memory of man. The great Tamil epic *Silappathikaram* speaks about the fertility and the greatness of this little mountain in chosen superlatives of which the following is a small reproduction.

> "ஐவன வெண்ணெலும் அறைக்கட் கரும்பும்
> கொய்பூந் தினையுங் கொழும்புன வரகும்
> காயமும் மஞ்சளும் ஆய்கொடிக் கவலையும்
> வாழையும் கமுகும் தாழ்குலைத் தெங்கும்
> மாவும் பலாவும் சூழடுத் தோங்கிய
> தென்னவன் சிறுமலை திகழ்ந்து தோன்றும்".
>
> (80-85 காடுகாண்காதை;
> மதுரைக் காண்டம்)

Even to-day, Sirumalai is famous for its plantain fruits which have a distinct sweetness of their own and which are often in great demand. On the top of the Hill Sirumalai, about 3,500′ high, there is a basin shaped plateau in which is situated the Sirumalai village, the subject matter of this report

Location and neighbourhood

3. The village which comprises of two hamlets, *i.e.*, Pudur and Chakkiliapatti besides the main village Pazhaiya Ur belongs to the Nilakottai taluk of Madurai district. Pazhaiya Ur which literally means a 'village of more ancient origin' is the local centre of Panchayat and Revenue administration and lies between the other two hamlets. The hamlet Chakkiliapatti lies about two furlongs away from the main village on the north and Pudur is situated about two miles away on the south. The hamlet Pudur lies on a less undulating ground, at a slightly lower terrain than the main village, whereas Chakkiliapatti is situated on a fairly elevated ground. In the topography, the main village

is surrounded by dense forests, coffee plantations and plantain gardens. Chakkiliapatti may be said to be surrounded entirely by coffee plantations and Pudur by plantain gardens for the most part.

Boundary

4. We see no other villages on the Hill Sirumalai. The nearest villages are only on the plains. On the east of Sirumalai Hill lie the villages of Anjilipatti and Konapatti and the Azhagarmalai. On the north lie the villages of Thabasimedai, Nochi Odaipatti, Irandalaparai and Vazhakaipatti. On the west lie the villages of Vellodu, Ambathurai and Chinnalapatti. We find Kodai road which is a railway station, Alanganallur, Palaimedu and Vadipatti villages on the south. Some of these villages are right on the foot of the hills while others are within a radius of about ten miles. Dindigul, the nearest Municipal Town which is also the head-quarters of a Revenue division is a town of some repute and has got historic associations. The villagers of Sirumalai frequent this town for making purchases of various goods and household provisions and take buses and trains to go to distant places. It is about 16 miles away from the village. It is a big commercial centre and the plantains and other hill produce grown in Sirumalai are marketed there. The place is very much noted for its iron safes and locks which are manufactured there. From the point of view of Revenue administration, Dindigul occupies a place only next to Madurai. Sirumalai falls within the Dindigul Revenue division.

Transport and communication

5. Sirumalai is one of the few backward villages that have not yet caught up with the modern trends. No modern amenity worth the name is seen here. The village is not easily accessible. It does not have a good macadamised road. To reach the village, one has to use old country-tracks and bridle paths which wind in endless zigs and zags. There is a mud road which is more an apology for a road through which a jeep can ply with extreme difficulty, negotiating during its course many risky angles and steep ascents.

To reach this village, the traveller has to arrive at Dindigul which is the junction of the Tiruchy-Madurai and Dindigul-Palghat railways. The Benaras-Cape Comorn National Highway also passes through Dindigul. Moreover, it is the centre of a network of inter-district roads connecting the neighbouring districts of Coimbatore, Tiruchy and Ramanathapuram.

From Dindigul, the village lies about 16 miles on the south and one has to proceed three miles along the Dindigul-Natham road from where a ghat road branches off to the village. It is a narrow mud road winding along as many as 16 hair-pin bends which are unprotected but for the piles of stones kept on their edges. The State Government have come forward to take up the work of widening this road at certain select points in order to provide safety to the vehicular as well as pedestrain traffic. But mere widening is not enough. A regular black-topped road of sufficient width with proper culverts is a most urgent necessity. During rainy season, there is a lot of erosion and land slide and rock-slide. During a heavy cyclone in December 1964, the road was awfully damaged and rendered useless. The bridle-paths are rugged, uneven and irregular and they are used only when the traveller is anxious to cut short the distance and reach the village urgently. These foot-paths often put to a most exacting trial even the sturdiest men and horses.

Mode of transport

6. Horses are common mode of transport. Sometimes carts are also engaged to transport goods from plains and vice-versa, but these are rare as the road is irregular and steep and has dangerous curves. People generally travel in private vans which ply between Sirumalai and Dindigul twice or thrice a day. It is a facility which is made much use of though many take the foot-paths on ponies' back. The people belonging to the lower strata of society cannot afford to take the van since the hire charges are little high, *i.e.*, Rs. 1·75 for up-trip and Rs. 1·50 for down-trip per passenger.

Communication

7. There is a branch Post Office in Pazhaiya Ur and a local Homoeopathy Doctor performs the duties of a Post Master also. Mail arrives not daily, but only thrice a week. For Telegraphic facilities, one has to go to Dindigul.

Soil

8. The village of Sirumalai with its two hamlets is embosomed in a forest, a considerable portion of which has been cleared for coffee and cardamom plantations and plantain gardens. Sirumalai contains a good deciduous scrub jungle, and it meets most of the fuel requirements of Dindigul and many places around. It also meets the firewood needs of Madurai City on account of its close proximity.

The plateau of the Sirumalai Hill, where plantain is mainly cultivated, has a good content of loamy soil. In the highest elevations where we come across dense forests, the soil is usually very fertile, usually a thin layer of black peaty earth over yellow clay. In the deciduous forests at the lower slopes, the soil is not so very fertile and in certain places it is just barren and exposed to heavy erosion.

Climate

9. The climate of Madurai district, though a little hot and dry, is fairly agreeable and never swings between extremes. The variation in temperature in the plains is between 60°—108° F or 15·6° and 42·2° C. The hottest part of the year in the plains is from April to June as elsewhere. But the climate of Sirumalai is usually salubrious though it is a little malarial. During winter, the high slopes of the mountain are mist-clad.

Rainfall

10. Sirumalai has the highest rainfall during October and November while February and March are the driest months. Thunder showers occurring in April and May give a passing relief from the oppressive summer heat. The average monthly rainfall figures (in Inches) for Dindigul and St. Joseph's Estate in Sirumalai are furnished below.

Description	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Annual
Dindigul	0·82	1·22	1·28	2·36	2·60	1·35	1·36	3·36	2·03	6·00	3·95	2·02	28·35
St. Joseph's Estate Sirumalai	3·52	0·73	1.58	4·52	3·68	1·38	2·29	3·99	4·35	9·47	8·85	5·80	50·11

Streams

11. Sirumalai has a number of streams where there is enough water for the greater part of the year and the most important of these streams is the Sathiar. The Sathiar which goes by the name of a river here originates from Pidariamman Malai at Manakattur, a place seven miles south of Pazhaiya Ur, and receives supplies from the Sembodai stream and other small streams taking their rise from St. Joseph's Estate, Kadambankulam, Mathakamalai and flows profusely down the hill, winds eastward through Palamedu, Vadugupatti, Alanganallur and merges into a tank and the surplus water joins the river Vaigai. Its water is used for irrigation purposes. There is a proposal to construct a dam near Palamedu at a crow-flight distance of about five miles from Sirumalai.

Apart from these, there are a number of small streams originating from the Sirumalai Hills. Some of them are: Nondimamarathu Odai, Vellimalai Aru, Kalankali Odai and Thumbi Cholai Odai. The Nondimamarathu Odai originates from Mullanpanrikaradu which is on the north-western extremity of the St. Joseph's Estate. A major quantity of its water is diverted for cultivation at the source itself and the remaining water flows into Vellodu Kanmai. During summer, water is scarce in the stream. It irrigates nearly 100 acres in the lands of the plains. The Vellimalai Aru originates from Vellimalai (silver mountain) and flows into the Kodai Road Kanmai after passing through the village Rajathanikottai. It irrigates an extent of about 50 acres. It dries up during summer. The Kalangali Odai originates on the south-east of Vellimalai and passes through Pooncholai Estate and joins the Vadipatti Kanmai (tank). It irrigates about 100 acres of land. The Thumbicholai Odai originates from Thumbicholai, five miles south of Sirumalai (by crow flight) and joins the Vadipatti Kanmai. It irrigates about 100 acres of land in the plains. Besides these, there are a number of other small jungle streams which are of no practical importance for our study.

Fauna

12. No wild animals like lion and tiger are found in Sirumalai. But panthers are not wanting and they are often seen in the interior of the thick woods. It is related by the village-folk that there is a small herd of bisons that has made Sirumali its home for quite a long time. One frequently comes across the jungle sheep known as '*Kezhai Adu*'. The jackal, the large

Rainfall particulars for the years 1956–1960

Month	1956			1957			1958			1959			1960		
	No. of rainy days	Monthly rainfall	Highest rainfall in 24 hrs.	No. of rainy days	Monthly rainfall	Highest rainfall in 24 hrs.	No. of rainy days	Monthly rainfall	Highest rainfall in 24 hrs.	No. of rainy days	Monthly rainfall	Highest rainfall in 24 hrs.	No. of rainy days	Monthly rainfall	Highest rainfall in 24 hrs.
January	2	0·85	0·51	...	...	...	2	0·45	0·35	1	0·26	0·26	...	...	...
February	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0·48	0·48	...	0·02	0·02
March	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	...	...	...	...	...
April	2	2·33	1·55	1	0·38	0·38	...	...	...	9	2·39	1·72	3	1·50	0·63
May	...	...	0·00	5	1·79	0·47	3	1·11	0·60	6	3·90	1·01	4	2·37	0·79
June	8	2·44	0·63	1	0·70	0·57	2	1·53	0·80	3	1·44	0·63	5	1·81	0·67
July	...	0·06	0·06	1	0·40	0·40	...	...	...	1	0·36	0·36	8	3·27	1·54
August	5	3·12	1·98	2	4·38	4·00	7	5·47	2·98	4	2·84	1·83	3	0·93	0·37
September	...	...	...	5	4·34	2·20	2	1·38	0·87	8	4·42	1·40	4	2·47	1·69
October	16	11·38	1·84	13	5·98	1·33	11	8·38	3·08	11	9·46	2·76	7	6·98	2·24
November	9	10·57	2·90	6	2·74	1·28	7	3·22	1·18	8	9·22	3·35	10	10·91	...
December	3	1·20	0·80	6	2·54	0·99	...	...	...	4	5·55	4·33	2	1·03	...
Total	...	**31·95**	...	...	**23·25**	...	...	**21·54**	...	...	**40·32**	...	...	**31·29**	...

red hill mongoose, the Nilgiris morten-cat, the Malabar short-tailed and brown squirrel are common in Sirumalai Hills. Monkeys of all varieties are found in the lower slopes of the hill.

Birds of many charming hues are also found in plenty in Sirumalai. The usual game birds occurring here are sand grouse and florican. The wood cocks are a common sight, if one goes a little inside the forest. Also, different kinds of falcons, kites, eagles, musical birds like cuckoo, mynas and parrots are found in considerable number. But crows are an absolute rarity. They are nowhere to be seen. The vermina commonly found are the mosquitoes of the malarial type and pests affecting coffee and banana plantations. Thanks to the sustained efforts of the National Malaria Eradication Project, mosquitoes have been very largely eradicated. The common reptiles of the hills are cobra, *kattu virian* (காட்டு விரியன்) *kannadi virian* (கண்ணாடி விரியன்) and non-venomous types like *suvai* (சுவை) *etc.*

Flora

13. The Sirumalai Hill belongs to the Sholavandan Forest Range. The Sholavandan Range has nine reserved forests extending over an area of 4,4769·74 acres, five ex-Panchayat reserved forests of 7,037·41 acres and two ex-estate forests of 2,4558·80 acres. Of these, the Sirumalai Hill has a minor portion of reserved forest and a major portion of ex-estate forests belonging to the Ammainayakkanur ex-Zamin. The Zamin estate extends to an area of 2,1532·16 acres.

Being a forest area, the flora of Sirumalai Hill is widely varied and at times highly interesting. Variations in altitudes and rainfall over the entire range

have a bearing on the vegetation in general. The floristic divisions of the Sirumalai forests may be classified as follows.

1. The semi-evergreen low level sholas;
2. The Savanna type or gall-nut type;
3. The dry deciduous fuel forest;
4. Inferior deciduous thorn forests or the Carnatic umbrella thorn forests.

The semi-evergreen low level sholas

14. These are found in most protected valleys of a height of 3,000′ and above. It is surrounded by forests of a mixed deciduous type and is not of any vast extent, being confined to moist valleys and sheltered hill slopes. Transitional stages between these two types are often met with at the margins. The chief species occurring in the sholas are:

Bischofia jovanica: (Milachadayan, Gholavengai, Malapuvarasu or Bishop's weed)
Cedrela toona: (Malavembu, Santhana vembu, Karansuli or Toon)
Chunrasia tabularis: (Agil, Vedivembu, Madagiri vembu or Chittagong wood)
Eleocarpus tuberculatis: (Pathrachi, Malampinnai or Rudrachana)
Canarium strictum: (Karunkungiliam or black dammar)
Myristiea species: (Jathikai)

There are also some smaller varieties of trees. They are:

Nephelium Congcina: (Shempuvam, Kattu puvan or Logan tree)
Agrosbstachys longifolia: (Manikulikki)
Agrostistachys indica: (Mancharu)

On the border areas of the shola forests, fires occur frequently during the hottest part of the year due to natural friction. Generally the areas under this type of forest vegetation is considered suitable for cultivation of cardamom (*Elettaria Cardaumum*) under the shade of the standing trees.

Savanna type or Gall-nut type

15. This type has a low moisture content and has the *Terminalia chebula* (Gall-nut), as the predominant species with a mixture of fire resistant species such as *Buchanam inalalifolia* (Kodaman kattumaram), *Shorea talura* (Kungiliam or lac tree), *Ptevocarpus marsupium* (Vengai or Bija sal, Kino tree), *Anogeissus latifolia* (Vetateali, Vellanagai or Axle wood) and *Phyllanthus emplica* (Nelli). These are interspersed with stunted teak and with undergrowth constituting mostly of tall coarse grass and *Phoenix acaulis* (or Ichampul). The Gall-nut in these forests fetches a handsome revenue as the minor forest produce.

The dry deciduous forests

16. This type is economically important and consists of open mixed deciduous fuel forests in the lower slopes of the Sirumalai. This type constitutes the main fuel resources for the city of Madurai, Dindigul town and other nearby villages on the plain. The more important species occurring in this type are:

Albizzia amara: (usil, Thurinji)
Chlorokylow swieteria: (Povasu, Vaimaram, Varimarai, East Indian Satin wood)
Canthium didymum: (Naluvay, Navugu)
Albizzia labbeck: (Vagai or East Indian wall nut)
Atalantia monophylda: (Malamandarai, Malainarallu)
Limonia acidissima: (Kattu elimichai)
Anogeissus lalifolia: (Vekkali, Vallanagai or axle wood)
Terminalia Paniculata: (Pillamarudu)
Cassia fistulia: (Konnai, Sarakonnai)
Strychuos Potatorum: (Thethankottai or clearing nut tree)
Strychnos nux vomica: (Ettic, Kanjiram)
Feronia elephantum: (Velam, Vila, or wood apple)

The condition of this type of forest is particularly bad as they were subject to excessive grazing, goat pruning and indiscriminate and unregulated fellings in the past by the villagers and Zamindars alike resulting in their over exploitation and absolute denudation that they are now in a most dilapidated condition. Trees of useful species have become almost extinct.

Inferior deciduous thorn forests

17. These are commonly called scrub jungles. These extend along the foot-hills and are mostly found in elevations varying from 500′ to 1250′. Due to intensive grazing, the soil is exposed and barren and the frequent tread of cattle has left the surface hard and caked preventing the germination of seed. Therefore, natural regeneration looks almost out of question. It is also unsuitable for artificial regeneration as the soil is generally shallow and poor in quality with a lot of stone content. The vegetation consists of low, thorny, open, degraded type of forests, being

often a promiscuous collection of bushes interspersed with blanks. The tree growth is as a rule stunted and mis-shapen, usually thorny species predominating, of which Acacia forms a formidable proportion. *Acacia planifrons* (odai or umbrella thorn) are common in this forest. There is an ill-defined lower storey of smaller trees and large shrubs, mostly spiny and often with other xerophytic characters. The ground is lightly covered with sparse thorny shrubs and grass. This type of forest is found in and around the Sathiar valley where a number of tamarind trees too are found. The species generally found in this forest are Acacia latronum, Acacia planifrons, Acacia leucophloea, Acacia sundra, Azadirchta indica, Gyrocarpus facquini, Zizhyphus jujuba and Tamarind indica.

Apart from this floristic list, there is an occurrence of sandal wood trees (*Santalum album*) over about 100 acres in the Sathiar Valley, over 1,000 to 1,500 acres on the northern slopes of Sirumalai (*Endlaparai area*) and to a minor extent of 15 acres in the Ammainayakkanur ex-Zamin forest near Vellimalai.

Plantations

18. There are vast plantations in Sirumalai and plantains and coffee are the most important crops. A total of 2,550·82 acres are under cultivation as per the village Revenue records. But this does not include the Government lands illicitly brought under cultivation by the ryots. Silver oak is a common tree that is found almost everywhere in the plantations along side plantain trees and coffee plants. Fruit trees such as orange, lime, jack, etc., are also found in Sirumalai. Cardamom which is another cash crop is raised in small patches of few acres under the sholas. Tea is not grown in Sirumalai.

Residential pattern

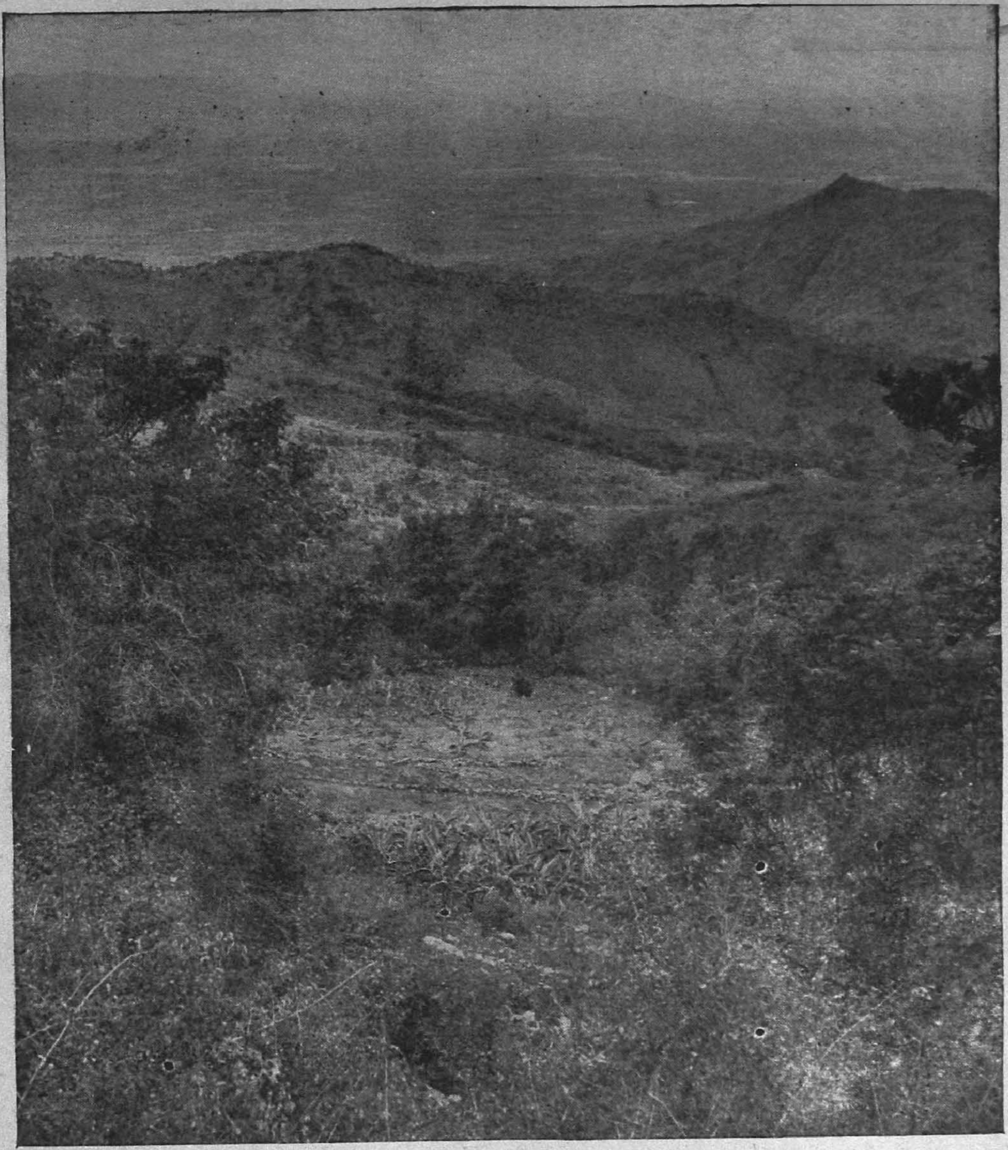
19. The very first glance itself would suggest that Sirumalai is a fairly small village. Its area is 4·03 sq. miles. As has been said elsewhere, it comprises three hamlets, i.e., Pazhaiya Ur, Pudur and Chakkiliapatti. The former two are inhabited by Vellalas, Naidus, Konars, Nadars, Gounders, Chettiars and the Pallars while Chakkliapatti has an exclusive concentration of the Scheduled Caste Chakkilias, except for two Muslim households.

A detailed account of the communities in each hamlet is given in Table No. 1.

Table No. 1

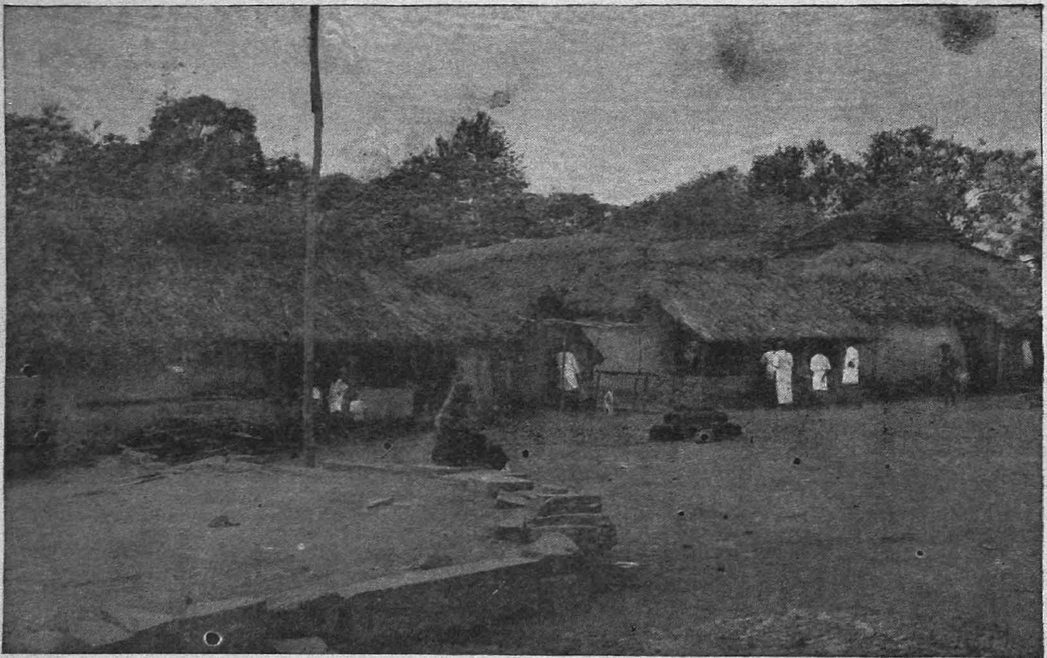
Hamletwise distribution of communities

Hamlets	Total households	Number of households belonging to different communities																						
		Vellalar	Chakkiliar	Naidu	Konar	Valayar	Nadar	Pallan	Naicker	Gounder	Chettiar	Asari	Parayar	Kuravan	Pandaram	Agamudaiyar	Brahmin	Oddar	Pandithar	Maravar	Piramalai Kallan	Christian	Muslim (Rowther)	Muslim (Pattani)
Pazhiya Ur	140	62	6	22	10	11	4	4	4	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	8	4	...
Pudur	172	58	4	54	6	2	4	3	2	4	...	1	2	2	1	1	1	...	1	..	...	24	2	...
Chakkiliapatti	106	4	92	...	1	...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	2
Total	418	124	102	76	17	13	11	7	6	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	32	7	2



A view of Sirumalai Hills.

A street view of Pazhaiyaur main hamlet.
The Motor Van is the usual mode of transport to go to Dindigul on the plains.



The hamlet of Pudur.

In all the three hamlets, houses stand out in a cluster at one single site, built almost close one upon another. They are not sparse and scattered as we see in a few of the hill villages. The brick and mortar houses form a small proportion while the number of thatched houses and small hovels preponderates. The ground being undulated, houses are often found one above the other over different parts of the slopes and stone pathways are provided for access. In Pudur hamlet, the ground level being even, the lay-out is uniform and resembles those in the plains. It goes without saying that there is no proper street system in PazhaiyaUr and Chakkilipatti hamlets. In Pudur hamlet too, the streets do not conform to any plan. It is bisected by a banana garden and the respective portions are called the North Street and South Street. The houses in all the three hamlets are a confusing jumble with poverty and backwardness writ large on them. They are steeped in an antique atmosphere and one has the feeling that one has been transported backwards by about a century.

Segregation of dwellings on caste basis is conspicuous and the dwellings of the low caste Pallans and Chakkilians are sufficiently removed from those of caste Hindus. The Chakkiliapatti hamlet is exclusively inhabited by the Chakkilians and the other Scheduled Castes living in the other two hamlets live sufficiently away from caste Hindus. The Pallans of Pudur live in a corner of a banana garden that bisects the hamlet.

Public places

20. Most of the public institutions of the village like Panchayat Board Office, Mathar Sangam, Maternity Centre etc., are located in Pazhaiyaur hamlet. There is a Co-operative Credit Society for the villagers in Pudur hamlet which was, for quite a long time, languishing. It has now been recently put on a sounder footing and is gradually picking up speed and life. The Chakkilians have their own Co-operative Society in Chakkiliapatti hamlet which has been started a few years ago and which for sometime had just a nominal existence only on paper. Though it is now found to work somewhat satisfactorily, it has a spasmodic existence and unless sustained enthusiasm on the part of the Chakkilians is forthcoming, it may gradually die a natural death.

There are three Elementary Schools, one at each hamlet. The school at Pazhaiyaur has a small masonry building. But it has no amenities like playgrounds etc., There is also a Montessory School for small children situated at Pazhaiyaur. There are two Social Educational Centres, one in Pudur hamlet and the other in Chakkiliapatti hamlet. But there is not enough evidence that these institutions are working satisfactorily and that they have not been thrown out of gear for want of public enthusiasm.

There are three drinking water wells, one in each hamlet. The Scheduled Caste people living in Pudur and Pazhaiyaur hamlets do not have wells of their own. They use the water from the wells used by Caste Hindus. They are not actully allowed to draw water from those wells, but the caste Hindu women, after filling up their pots, pour water into the pots of the waiting Scheduled Caste women which the later carry. This is the general practice. There appears to be no active opposition on the part of the Caste Hindus to the Scheduled Caste women drawing water occasionally from these wells themselves due to compulsion of circumstances. But these occasions are consciously kept to a minimum. For bathing purposes, the villagers go to the river Sathiar and sometimes to the wells. The Pazhaiyaur people take bath in a small pond that lies in the village itself.

There are eight temples, big and small, in all the three hamlets. Of these, the Kaliamman Koil, Vinayagar Koil, Vellimalai Koil, and Satha Koil are in Pazhaiyaur. There are another Vellimalai Koil, another Vinayagar Koil, and one Palichiamman Koil in Pudur. There is one Muthalamman Koil in Chakkiliapatti.

There are as many as six cremation grounds in the main village and the two hamlets; two in Pazhaiyaur, two in Pudur and two in Chakkiliapatti. The first original settlers of this village whose descendants live even now at Pazhaiyaur go by the appellation *'Ezhu Veetu Pillaimar'* (Pillais of seven families). They have a separate cemetery of their own. It is a masonry structure of considerable size with a crude resemblance to a temple wherein is provided an arrangment for laying down the corpses into the earth and closing up the passage with a stone slab. The Vellalas have their own cremation ground on the east of St. Joseph's Estate. The Naidus too have their own cremation ground which is near Chakkiliapatti on the north. The

Chakkilians also have their own burial ground somewhere here. At Pudur, the Pillais and other caste people have their own separate cremation grounds and Christians, their burial ground on the eastern side of the hamlet.

Etymology

21. Sirumalai has a number of legends, quite interesting and amusing, handed down from generation to generation. It is said that Sirumalai originally consisted of seven villages. They were: Thenmalai Uradi, Makkattu Ur, Vellaiyampatti or Patti, Sannasikoil Ur, Pazhaiyaur, Sermankinar Pudupatti, Durgai Amman Koil Ur, and Araliamman Koil Ur. Six of them became extinct for reason which nobody knows leaving Pazhaiyaur alone. The story that has gained some currency and has survived in popular belief is as follows:

"A troupe of acrobats had invited the people from the seven villages to attend to one of their performances, hoping to give them a plentiful treat of gymnastics and magic to their eyes and thus win their acclamation. But to the great dismay of the troupe none of the villagers turned up. Their excuse was that the mosquitoes which abounded at the place in profuse numbers would give them a hell of trouble and endanger their health. The troupe promised to insulate the people by their power of magic from the bite of mosquitoes and the promise was kept up. Astounded by the magical powers of the acrobat troupe, the people assembled, got possessed by fear, and they were on their nerves. One individual in the gathering, whose fear and alarm had been exceeding all bounds, in a fit of cowering despair, cut the pole on which a pregnant acrobat woman was playing. This caused the death of the woman. The woman, in her agonies of death, is stated to have uttered a curse to the effect that of the seven villages, only one would survive. The words of a dying individual, especially if the death is caused by the misdeed of another, are said to possess unfailing efficacy. The villagers believe that the curse of the acrobat woman had its effect and it is because of that Pazhaiyaur alone had escaped the destroying hand of fate. The word 'Pazhaiyaur' means Ancient Village and in contrast, 'Pudur' means New Village. Chakkiliapatti derives its name from the community of Chakkilias who exclusively inhabit it.

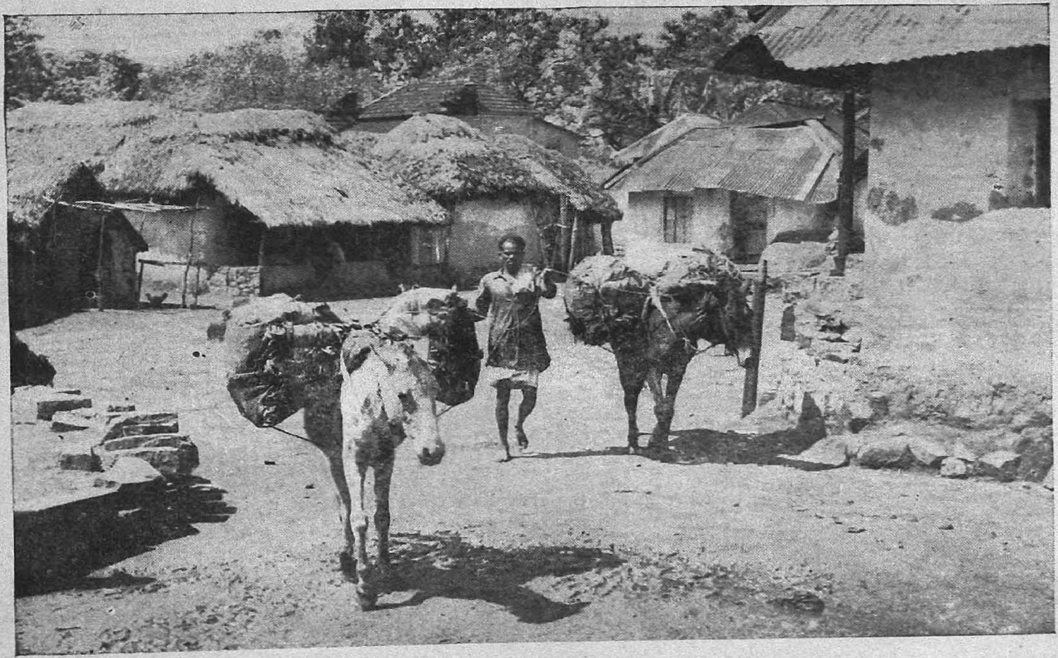
It is related that traces of extinct villages are still found in Sirumalai. To see them, one has to struggle his way through immense thickets of jungle creepers and trees, which adventure is hard to undertake. In one of the ancient villages called Thenmalai, the remains of foundations, drainage, the arena of bull fight and what is more interesting, a big brass tray in a brittle condition, are found. Apart from these relics, a number of curious idols belonging to the Hindu pantheon are also found in Sirumalai which proclaim its one-time glory.

Settlement History

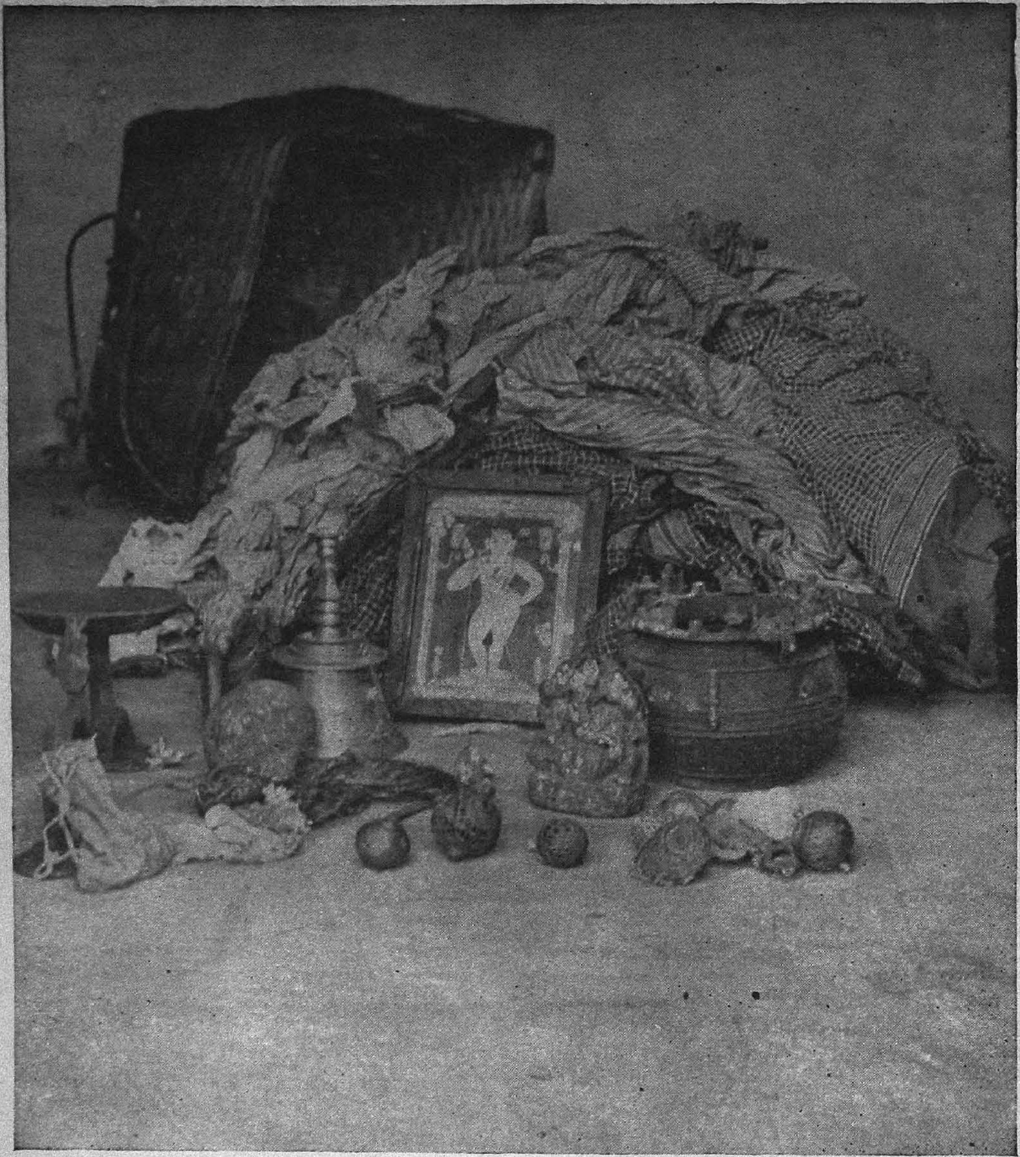
22. The settlement history of the village also has its own legends of which one may be related here. The early settlers are said to be a group of 'Vellalas' from Kollimalai Hills (in Salem-Trichi districts). The story goes that seven families of Hindu Vellalas sought safety in this hill from the fury of a Muslim potentate whose wrath was provoked when one Vellala girl called Ammani, preferred death to ignominy at his hands. These people reclaimed lands for cultivation in fertile tracts amid forests and jungles. The descendants of these seven families, of whom reference has already been made, are popularly known as '*Ezhu Veetu Karar*'. They stand high in popular esteem in the village. The departed girl Ammani has become the community deity of the Vellalas here and pooja is offered to her every year on the day of 'Masi Magham'. Her belongings such as the saree and the toys supposed to have been used by her are still preserved in a casket in the village. Her memory is cherished, her story is chanted by pious tongues around the hearth, her example is underlined by the elders for imitation by the fair sex, and with the passage of generations, her name is acquring added lustre. The 'Ezhu Veetu Karar' are supposed to be still so very important that the practice of chanting manthras over the sacred ash during important ceremonies is, down to this day, their exclusive right.

These Vellalas were followed by other Vellalas, Naidus and Chakkilias to this village. A majority of the minor communities like Konars, Nadars, Pallans, Gounders, Chettiars, Asaris, Muslims etc. are recent immigrants from the neighbouring districts of Coimbatore and Ramnad. On the whole, 324 households out of the present 418 in the village claim to be the original inhabitants of the village, dating back to four or five generations. The settlement pattern of the different communities in the village is shown in Table No. II.

The hamlet of Chakkiliyapatti, where Chakkiliyans are exclusively concentrated.



Ponies are the usual mode to transport plantation produce to the plains.



The belongings of Ammani, the clan deity of the Ezhu Veetu Karar.

Table No. II

Settlement History

Community	Total number of households	Number of households settled					Natives	Places from which the families have migrated			
		Before 5 generations	Between 4-5 generations	Between 2-4 generations	One generation	Present generation		Place	Taluk	District	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	
Vellalar	124	...	...	...	...	20	104	Parapatti	Dindigul	Madurai	1
								Karasalpatti	Sathur	Ramnad	1
								Mangalam	...	Coimbatore	1
								Uthamapalayam	Periakulam	Madurai	1
								Karupatti	Dindigul	„	2
								Nilakottai	...	„	2
								Vadagupatti	Dindigul	„	1
								Sembatti	Palani	„	1
								Ottanchathram	„	„	2
								Mulaiyur	Melur	„	1
								Pudupatti	Dindigul	„	2
								Natham	Melur	„	1
								Batlagundu	Nilakottai	„	1
								Akkarapatti	Pollachi	Coimbatore	1
								Karattur	Palani	Madurai	1
								Sukravarapatti	„	„	1
											20
Chakkiliar	102	...	...	...	...	8	94	Dindigul Town	Dindigul	Madurai	1
								Vellodu	„	„	1
								Anamalai	Pollachi	Coimbatore	1
								Perumalkoilpatti	Thirumangalam	Madurai	1
								Karupatti	Dindigul	„	1
								Andipatti	„	„	3

Table No. II (Contd.)

Settlement History

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Naidu	76	...	...	...	...	3	73	Sadayampatti	Melur	Madurai
								Vedasandur	Dindigul	,,
								Sholavandan	Nilakottai	,,
Konar	17	...	...	...	...	12	5	Kottur	Palani	Madurai
								Veliapatti	Nilakottai	,,
								Kalluth	Thirumangalam	,,
								Boothagudi	Melur	,,
								Udumalpet	Udumalpet	Coimbatore
								Koraipatti	Palani	Madurai
								Chinnalapatti	Dindigul	,,
								Achambattu	Palani	,,
								Marappagoundanpatti	...	Coimbatore
								Gangavarpatti	Nilakottai	Madurai
								Pudupatti	Aruppukottai	Ramnad
Valayar	13	...	...	...	...	2	11	Oliyur	Palani	Madurai
								Pallapatti	Nilakottati	,,
Nadar	11	...	...	...	...	9	2	Batlagundu	Nilakottai	Madurai
								Chinnalapatti	Dindigul	,,
								Ambur	Nilakottai	,,
								Vedanallur	Dindigul	,,
								Valiapatti	Nilakottai	,,
								Muraiyur	Tirupathur	Ramnad
								Sanarpatti	Dindigul	Madurai
								Udumalpet	Udumalpet	Coimbatore
								Pattiveeranpatti	Kodaikanal	Madurai

Table No. II (Contd.)

Settlement History

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...	4	3	Pudupatti	Udumalpet	Coimbatore	2
								Parapatti	Dindigul	Madurai	
								Batlagundu	Nilakottai	Madurai	
Naicker	6	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	
Gounder	4	...	...	...	...	3	1	Othupatti	Nilakottai	Madurai	
								Ottanchathram	Palani	,,	
								Goundanpatti	Srivilliputhur	Ramnad	
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...	3	...	Paravai	Dindigul	Madurai	
								Mapparagoundanpatti	...	Coimbatore	
								Sanarpatti	Dindigul	Madurai	
Asari	2	...	...	...	...	1	1	Usilampatti Pudur	Thirumangalam	Madurai	
Parayar	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	...	1	1	Sholavandan	...	Madurai	
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	Vadipatti	Dindigul	Madurai	
								Mangalam	Periakulam	,,	
Agamudayar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	Periakulam	Madurai	
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	

Table No. II (Contd.)

Settlement History

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	Nilakottai.	...	Maduari	
Piramalaikallan	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	
Christian	32	...	...	...	...	19	13	Paravai	Dindigul	Madurai	2
								Sevalpatti	...	Ramnad	1
								Karasalpatti	Sathur	„	3
								Muraiyur	...	...	2
								Karalpatti	Palani	Madurai	1
								Nagarkoil	Agastheeswaram	Kanyakumari	1
								Ariayanallur	Dindigul	Madurai	1
								A. Vellodu	...	„	1
								Ottanchathram	Palani	„	2
								Ambur	Nilakottai	„	1
								Ganguvarpatti	„	„	1
								...	...	Kanyakumari	1
								Hanumantharayankottai	Dindigul	Madurai	1
								Pudupatti	...	Coimbatore	1
Muslim Rowther	7	...	...	...	...	5	2	Udumalpet	Pollachi	Coimbatore	3
								Dindigul	Dindigul	Madurai	2
Muslim Pattani	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	
Total	418	...	...	...	...	94	324				

CHAPTER II

PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL CULTURE

Ethnic Composition

23. Sirumalai village has a multi-ethnic composition of as many as 20 communities amounting to a total of 1,920 persons. Though the village remains backward the various communities live in perfect harmony and in mutual accord. They scrupulously practise their own community customs and rituals, as far as social life is concerned. The Scheduled Castes, of course, suffer certain disadvantages which are traditional and incidental to the general set-up of society and in no way peculiar to Sirumalai. But the Scheduled Castes and the other low class communities like Pazhians are treated with sympathy and good-will. As far as we have ascertained, there has never been any noticeable ill-will between any two communities and they display towards each other sufficient understanding.

Vellalas, Naickers and the Scheduled Caste Chakkilians are the numerically significant communities while the other communities form a negligible proportion. But here again the small communities of Konars, Valayars. and Nadars, have to be excepted, though these communities cannot come on a par with Vellalas, Naickers and Chakkiliars numerically. Their population is not so very insignificant. A detailed account of the ethnic structure in the village is clearly shown in Table No. III below.

Table No. III

Ethnic Composition

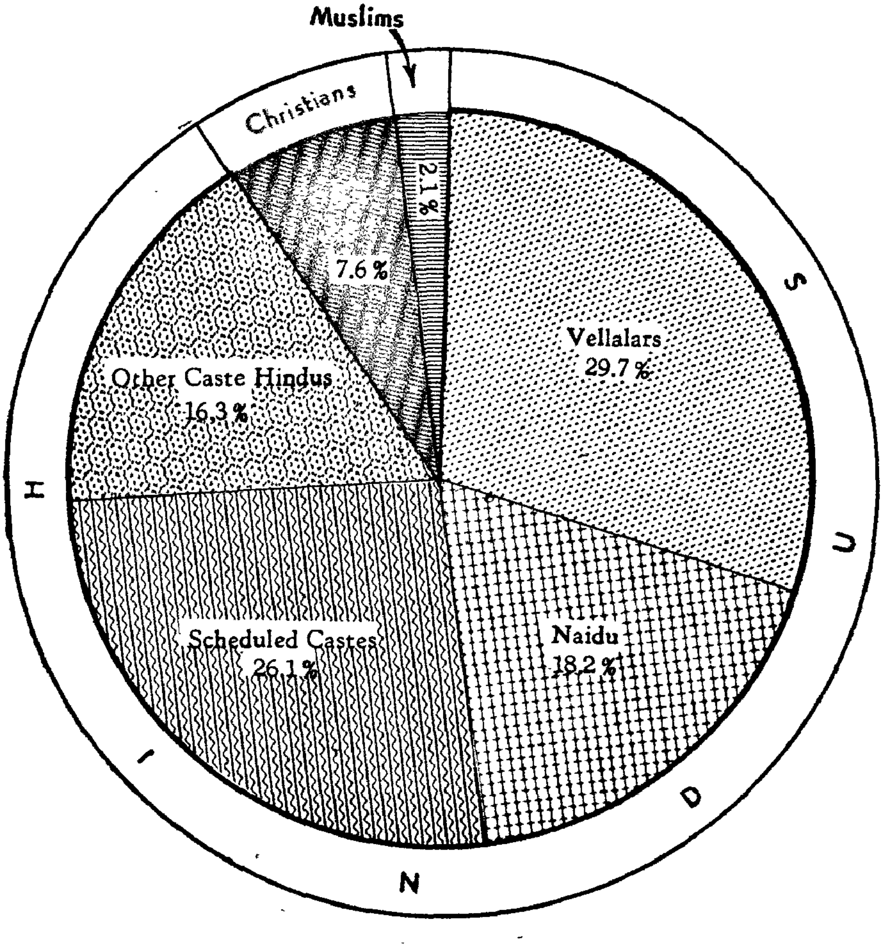
Religion	Community	Sub-Caste/ Sub-sect	Total No. of households	Total persons	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Hindu	Vellalar		92	442	221	221
„	„	Sozhia	15	84	41	43
„	„	Kodikkal	16	74	41	33
„	„	Pandiya	1	3	2	1
„	Chakkiliar (S.C.)		102	504	253	251
„	Naidu	Gavara	75	326	171	155
„	„	Vaduga	1	9	7	2
„	Konar		17	73	38	35
„	Asari		2	5	2	3
„	Parayar (S.C.)		2	8	4	4
„	Kuravan (S.C.)		2	6	4	2
„	Pandaram		2	3	2	1
„	Agamudayar	Servai	1	5	2	3

Table No. III (Contd.)

Ethnic Composition

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Hindu	Brahmin		1	1	...	1
,,	Oddar		1	4	3	1
,,	Pandithar		1	1	1	...
,,	Maravar		1	4	2	2
,,	Piramalai kallan		1	3	1	2
,,	Valayar	Maniam	11	58	32	26
		Ambalam	1	6	2	4
		Moopanar	1	7	4	3
,,	Nadar		11	35	19	16
,,	Pallan (S.C.)	Kudumban	7	31	15	16
,,	Naicker		6	29	16	13
,,	Gounder		4	22	9	13
,,	Chettiar		3	8	4	4
Christian	Christian	Roman Catholic	32	129	69	60
Islam	Muslim	Rowther	8	35	22	13
	,,	Pattani	1	5	3	2
		Total	418	1,920	990	930

ETHNIC COMPOSITION



Vellalas: origin

24. The Hindu Vellalas constitute the biggest community in the village, their households forming 29·66% of the total households in the village and their population 31.41% of the total population. Vellalas, in general, are the famous cultivating class of the Tamil country and are an important community in Madurai District. Etymologically, the word Vellalas derives from the word 'Velanmai'. The word Velanmai in Tamil means 'control and management of water' which, in its expanded sense, includes tillage or cultivation. The word 'Velanmai' in general has now come to connote cultivation only. The Vellalas are a sturdy class, capable of untiring and sincere exertion on the soil, always industrious and never indolent. Many Vellala youngsters have taken avocations in Government service and in the educational field and the like. But a good majority of them are still engaged in cultivation only. They are highly caste-conscious, and do not take up easily avocations that are derogatory to their prestige. They style themselves as Pillais and suffix this title to their names.

25. There are four main divisions among the Vellalas, each named after the tract or country from which they emigrated.

1. The Thondaimandala Vellalas. i.e., the dwellers of Pallava country (Chingleput and North Arcot district.)
2. The Sozhia Vellalas, i.e., men of the Chola country (Tanjore and Tiruchi districts.)
3. The Pandya Vellalas or the inhabitants of the Pandyan Kingdom (Madurai and Thirunelveli districts.) and
4. The Konga Vellalas or the residents of the Kongan country (Coimbatore and Salem districts.)

There are numerous sub-divisions in each of these main divisions based on their original territory. The Pandya Vellalas who are found mostly in Madura district are divided into Karkattars, Nangudis, Punjais, Arumburs, Sirukudis, Agamudaiyar, Nirpuisis etc. The Thondaimandala Vellalas are divided into Tuluvas, Poonamallees, Kondaikakattis etc. The Sozhia Vellalas are sub-divided into the Vellala Chettiars, the Kodikals (growers of betel vine), and Kannakilli Nattar etc. The Konga Vellalas are divided into Sendalais, Padaithalais, and the Vellikkai etc.

The Vellalas of Sirumalai are mainly from Pandya territory. But there are as many as thirty one households of Sozhia Vellalas too. The Sozhia Vellalas of this village are believed to be the original settlers of this village, and it is they that are locally called by the distinguished appellation, "Ezhu Veetu Karar". The other Vallalas are mostly migrants from places like Sudiyur, Manamadurai, Silukkuvarpatti etc, and even their migration dates back to a very distant past. The Ezhu Veettu Karar maintain a proud exclusiveness and do not have any marital alliance with the other Vellalas in the village. All the Vellalas in the village are traditionally Saivites. To prove that they are Saivites from a misty past, they point to a stone idol of Sivalingam above 5' high at the site of the extinct village Thenmaliur. They claim that this Sivalingam is the one that was worshipped by the ancestors of 'Ezhu Veettu Karar'. These Vellalas of Sirumalai have their clan deities also like the Ammani, the Sozhanachiamman, Pachanachiamman etc. The other Vellalas worship minor deities like Karuppuswamy, Ayyanar (the guardian deity of the village) etc.

Social customs

26. Despite the divisions and sub-divisions, the Vellalas in general observe certain customs that are common to all of them. In their marriage ceremonies, they adopt some of the Brahminical rites and engage Brahmins as their officiating priests. But the 'Ezhu Veettu Karar' enjoy a position of prestige and occupy a place of primacy in the social set-up. The head of the 'Ezhu Veettu Karar' is respectably known as 'Gounder'. The bride and the groom, to whatever caste they may belong, should pay their obeisance to the Gounder and receive his blessings. The members of the 'Ezhu Veettu Karar' are specially invited to the marriages and the other important functions and received with marked courtesy and great civility.

Marriage customs

27. When the bride's party and the bridegroom's party informally agree to the proposed marital alliance, the formal procedures start. The ceremony in which this mutual agreement is formally confirmed and announced is known as 'Nichayathamboolam', i e., the betrothal ceremony. The betrothal is usually conducted after night fall. The bridegroom's party goes to the bride's house with a number of trays laden with such articles as coconuts, flowers turmeric betel leaves and a costly saree and other presentation articles. The trays are usually odd

in number, either five or seven. Often the bridegroom's party goes with the accompaniment of drummings and pipings. The gathering consists mostly of the close relatives, thick friends as well-wishers of both the parties wherein the leading local gentry also are present. The respectable elders in the assembly pose a formal question to both the parties whether they agree to the alliance and it goes without saying that the answers are in the affirmative. The terms of the marriage also are now discussed formally and made known to the assembly. Then the parties exchange betel leaves and nuts between themselves and they smear sandal paste to each other. This is symbolical of the confirmation of the agreement between the parties to have the alliance. Then 'Thamboolam', i.e., betel leaves and nuts are distributed to the people assembled, the Gounder families and the Nattanmaikaran families receiving the Thamboolam first. The practice of giving dowry is not in vogue among the Vellalas of this village, but they have a system of ceremonial presentations which goes by the traditional name of *Seer Varisai* which the bride's party makes to the bridegroom's party. This costs the bride's party so much sometimes that, except for the technical distinction, it is scarcely distinguishable from dowry. This is usually made in the form of cooking vessels, silver or ever-silver, bedding and drawing room furniture, clothes, jewels etc. Dindigul is the usual place which they choose to hold their marriages. Marriages are celebrated at the public choultries or at the houses of relatives in Dindigul. Very rarely marriages are celebrated in Sirumalai even when both the parties belong to that village. There is a superstitious belief which has not worn out with 'Time' that marriages should not be celebrated in places where the crows do not fly. Usually in hill tracts one does not see crows. But the more plausible reason seems to be that there are not enough facilities for the movement of the people and the difficulties of transport very much come in the way.

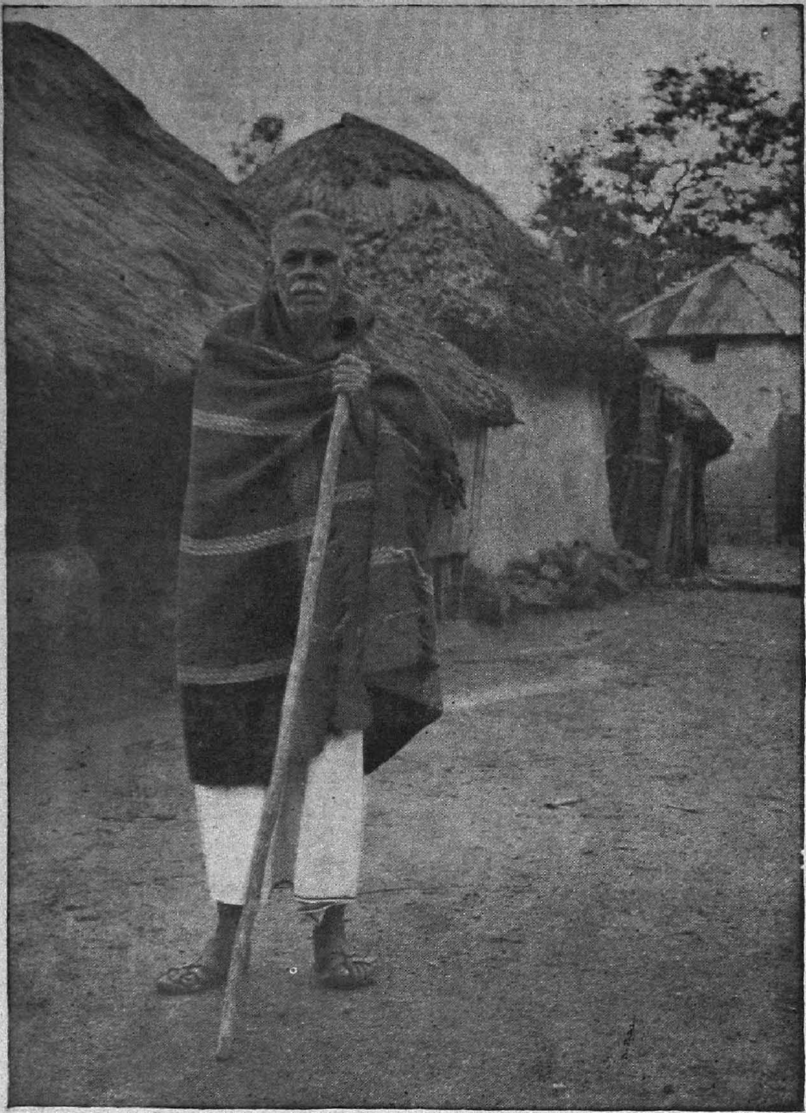
28. The erection of marriage dais which is called in local jargon *Manavarai* is an important job in which many skilled and beloved hands are employed. It is a raised platform with a decorated canopy over it. The decoration of the Manavarai reflects the financial status of the parties. Sometimes it is illuminated with twinkling electric bulbs of varied colours. The canopy is studded with stars made of aluminium foils. *Kolam* or free hand designs of chunam are drawn before the dais and sometimes around the dais. On the day of marriage, various auspicious articles like '*Arasanipanai* (decorated earthen pots), plates with Pongal (rice cooked with sugar, milk, ghee, dhal etc.), turmeric smeared rice, flowers, fruits and sandal paste etc., are placed before it. The *Muhurthakkal Naduthal* or the hoisting of the milk post which is a sacred ceremony of much importance is done either on the day previous to the marriage or on the day of the marriage itself at a sufficiently early hour. It is usually tied to a pole of the marriage booth (*Manavarai*). The priest officiating at the marriage blesses the milk post. The so-called milk post is usually a small bundle of green twigs of some milky trees.

It is planted by the bridegroom, assisted by some elderly venerable persons, the number being usually odd. The Purohit, i.e., the priest, ignites the Homan fire and offers poojas to Lord Vigneswarar who is symbolised by a triangle shaped turmeric paste, invoking His blessings and seeking His guidance and protection. Then the bridegroom undergoes the *Kanganam Kattuthal* ceremony. *Kanganam* is a small turmeric-smeared cord to which is attached a small amulet which the priest ties to the right wrist of the bridegroom. The priest then hands over the wedding clothes to the bridegroom who wears them.

The bride is then led to the Pandhal accompanied by the bridegroom's sister and a group of *sumangalis* (women whose husbands are alive) amidst *Nathaswaram* music. She first touches the Muhurthakkal with both her palms. Then she goes to the dais to undergo the *Kanganam kattuthal* ceremony. Now the Purohit hands over to the bride her wedding clothes which is known as *Muhurtha Pattu* or the bridal vestments. While the bride goes to a separate apartment with her companions for putting on the clothes, the bridegroom is taken to the nearest Vinayagar temple for *Vinayagar Dharsanam.* At the temple, the bridegroom offers prayer to Lord Vinayagar and breaks a coconut, invoking His grace for a happy wedded life. When he returns to the marriage pandhal, accompained by a considerable gathering, he is received by the bride's sister, usually the junior-most, who washes his feet with water and puts on a silver ring called *Minchi* to his right toe and hands him the wedding dress. The bridegroom puts on the wedding dress.

29. The ceremony culminates in the most important ritual known as *Thali* tying. The priest chants vedic manthras before the Homam fire in which he pours every now and then ghee, to be more precise clarified melted butter. He invokes the blessings of all the

An old Vellala woman - The ear ornaments of Thandatti can be seen



A Naidu old man.

great Gods of the Hindu pantheon, and blesses the Thali or the marriage badge, and placing it in a plate over a heap of turmeric-smeared rice and coconut, sends it round the assembly for the blessings of the elderly and the venerable, who touch the Thali with both their palms which manifest piety and good wishes. While doing this, they take a pinch of turmeric rice from the tray which they keep in their hands. After the round is over, the plate reaches back the hands of the priest who takes the Thali out of it and hands it to the bridegroom. Now the groom ties the Thali around the neck of the bride accompanied by a mounting crescendo of Melam and Nathaswaram music. In the tying of the Thali, the bridegroom is assisted by his sister. This is immediately followed by the bride and bridegroom garlanding each other.

Tharai varthal

30. *Tharai Varthal* is an important ceremony laden with a precious significance. The bride's father, or in his absence some elderly male relative of the bride who is usually next of kin or her guardian, takes the hands of the bride and puts them on the hands of the bridegroom and pours milk over them, signifying thereby that he is making a sacred gift of the girl to the bridegroom. The '*Seer Varisai*' or the bridal presents are also now recounted by the priest as going with the bride to the groom's house.

Another ceremony known as 'Nalangu' is common among most communities in Tamil Nad. It is in vogue among the Vellalas of this village also. There are certain traditional songs sung on this occassion by the womenfolk of both the parties. This ceremony, is intended to ward off the effect of evil eyes on the bridal pair. During this ceremony, sandal and vermilion powder etc., are smeared on the forehead and cheeks of the couple by the men and women who take part in this ceremony. A tray with burning camphor is waved round the heads of the couple. In the '*Nalangu*' ceremony, it is the bride's party that takes the lead and dominates the occasion. The members of the 'Ezhu Veettu Karar' are prominently associated with this function.

Then the invitees for the marriage are treated to a sumptuous feast with a variety of dainties, delicacies and succulencies. In the evening, the bridal pair go to the bridegroom's house where they are received with application of sandal to their forehead and Arathi i.e., the waving of burning camphor in a plate containing turmeric red water.

The consummation of the marriage is celebrated on the marriage day itself unlike in some of the communities where a separate auspicious day is fixed for it. The bridegroom is given a cash present by the bride's party which is usually placed at the nuptial cot decorated with flower festoons. At the dawn of next day, the bride's sister receives the bridegroom at the threshold of the nuptial room with the end of her saree spread on her hands. The bridegroom drops some coins in it.

On the third day, the bridal couple are invited to the bride's house when a grand feast is arranged. This is called 'Maruveedu Puguthal'. On the fifteenth day of the marriage, the bride's party sends a handsome consignment of popular local edibles and dainties, put in a pot or along with a pot, to the bridegroom's house. This is known as the sending of 'Paniyarakudam'. Along with this, they also give a cash present tied in a yellow cloth, which is opened at the bridegroom's house by his sister after a series of oblations to the family deity. These eatables are then distributed to the relatives and friends on the bridegroom's side. The bridal couple are also invited to the bride's house on festive occasions like Deepavali, Pongal, Eighteenth of Adi etc., during the year when the couple are presented with cash, clothes etc.

Birth customs

31. There are certain customs which are observed before and after a child is born. The pre-natal ceremonies begin as early as in the seventh month of the girl's conception. The girl's parents invite the girl to their house for confinement after treating the husband, his parents and his relatives to a sumptuous food which they take with them to the husband's house in the form of a bundle which is called '*Kattusoru*'. The food is usually of different varieties of rice-bath prepared out of curd which is known as தயிர் சாதம் '*curd rice*', and rice prepared with tamarind or lemon which is known as '*pulichatham*' and sweet edibles and many other kinds of dishes prepared out of vegetables. On this occasion, the bride's parents make a formal cash present of of Rs. 5 to the husband. The girl is brought to her parent's house on an auspicious day and certain rituals are observed to avert devilish influences and the effects of the evil eye.

Valaikappu and Poochchooduthal

32. There is a maternity assistant stationed in the village who usually attends to all the deliveries.

Formerly, the villagers used to get the services of the local elderly women called '*Thais*' or elderly barber women who make a profession of attending to deliveries and in which they have some experience too. There are also people who take the expectant mothers to Dindigul town at the bottom of the Sirumalai Hill to be attended to by some Lady Doctor or to be admitted in some hospital. The new-born baby is first given sugared water. Usually a few drops of sugared water are put on the tongue of the child by a venerable elderly gentleman of the village and this practice is known as 'Seeni Koduthal'. What is the rationale behind this practice and how it originated, we are not able to tell. But, we can give a poetical interpretation and say that this practice is symbolic of the elders' blessings that the life of the child be sweet throughout. It is certainly not without some significance that the child, the moment it appears on this earth, is made to taste something that is sweet. For about three or four days, the mother is kept on a very light and restricted diet.

Birth entails pollution for thirty days and on the thirtieth day, the purification ceremony known as '*Punniakavachanam*' is performed. The house is white-washed, and the mother and the baby are given ceremonial bath. The household utensils and other articles are cleaned. The old mud pots are replaced by new ones. Every nook and corner of the floor of the house is sprinkled with cow-dung solution. The mother and baby, who till then were confined to a private apartment, are now invited into the house.

33. The naming of the child is also performed on the same day. Some name is chosen. The child is kept on the mother's arm while its maternal uncle whispers the chosen name thrice into its ears. The close relatives are also invited sometimes. The maternal uncle presents the child with gold ornaments like chain, ring or waist chord and the mother with new clothes. The naming ceremony is followed by a good feast for the friends and relatives. Of course, the scale of the ceremony varies with the financial status of the parties. The mother and the baby are then taken to the husband's house on an auspicious day and the occasion is marked by the distribution of sweet - candy to friends and relatives. The ceremonies are a little more elaborate in the case of the first child. As the number of children increases, these ceremonies gradually tend to be informal and expenditure incurred also tends to become nominal. An astrologer is also invited to cast the horoscope of the child during the naming ceremony.

Ear-boring

34. The first tonsure ceremony of the child is usually done in the nearby temples only. Some people take a vow to distant famous temples to conduct the tonsure ceremony of their children there, and are particular in fulfilling their vows.

The ear-boring ceremony for the child is usually performed when the child is about one or two years old. It is done on an auspicious day chosen by some local astrologer or on a festival day. For the first child, this is generally done on a fairly grand scale and some of the well-to-do Vellalas even send out printed invitations to their friends and relatives. The piercing of the ear by a gold pin is done by a goldsmith or by the maternal uncle in the presence of a goldsmith. It is an occasion when friends and relatives make certain presents in the form of cash or articles known as 'Moi Murai'. These are traditional customs that are scarcely departed from. The maternal uncle is expected to take a prominent part in this ceremony and the presents he makes, whatever they are, are supposed to be of special importance. The other relatives also call on the child, with trays of presents accompanied at times with musical band etc., and this is known as 'Thattu Azhaiththal'. It is a well-established custom that the ear ornament worn by the child at time of the ear-boring ceremony should be presented only by the maternal uncle of the child.

Vidyarambam

35. The first teaching of the alphabets to the child is commenced in a ritualistic way and this is known as 'Vidyarambam'. The child is made sit at the feet of the teacher and make a nominal present of cash to him which is known as 'Dhakshinai' which is placed on a tray containing fruits, pansupari and flowers and a cocoanut. The Guru, i.e., the teacher, invokes the blessings of Lord Vinayagar, the remover of all obstacles and Saraswathi, the Goddess of knowledge, in a small pooja performed on his part. The teacher then writes the first Tamil alphabet "அ" on the tongue of the child and he holds the hand of the child and makes it write the same letter on the slate.

Puberty ceremony

36. Another important ceremony in the life cycle of a girl is her attainment of puberty. The moment the fact is known to the mother and the other womenfolk in the house, the girl is given a bath and certain rites are observed. The maternal uncle's wife takes the lead in giving a bath to the girl and making other arrangements. In the meantime the closest relatives living around are informed. The girl is then led into a small thatched apartment, specially erected for the occasion by the maternal uncle of the girl. Before erecting the hut, the maternal uncle brings a bundle of '*Tharugam*' grass which he throws on the roof of the hut. The relatives who visit the girl on that day bring with them gingelly oil, edibles made out of raw rice, coconut and jaggery. In the former days, the hut was wholly constructed out of '*Tharugam*' grass. Now only a handful of grass is put on the hut symbolically.

Pollution, consequent on puberty, lasts for 15 days and sometimes 21 days also. If any village festival intervenes, the purification ceremony is postponed to a date subsequent to the conclusion of the village festival. During the pollution period, the girl is segregated from other family members and she is given separate vessels for her use. During this period of 15 days when she is exclusively occupying the thatched apartment, she is given specially nutritious food. The relatives bring her substantial items of food, usually non-vegetarian, every day in turn.

The purification ceremony is called '*Punniathanam*' in local parlance. On that day, the house is white-washed and there is a sort of spring-cleaning. There is sprinkling of cow-dung water and urine in all corners of the house. The girl is given a ceremonial purificatory bath by her mother, assisted by the wife of the maternal uncle. The day is sometimes celebrated with much eclat and even printed invitations are sent to friends and relatives. The maternal uncle is prominently associated with the function. It is a custom that on that day the girl should wear only the saree and the blouse presented by the maternal uncle and he also presents some other articles mainly of toilet, all of which go together under the name of '*Thaimaman Seer*'. The girl is seated in a spacious hall or room inside the house where the invited womenfolk assemble. The female members of the Nattanmaikaran or the Gounder family wave a tray of turmeric red water and burning camphor before the girl and then hand it, over the head, to the womenfolk that stand behind the girl who do the same thing in their turn at the back. This is known as '*Aarathi Eduthal*'. Then the girl undergoes the '*Adaisuthu*' ceremony. A sieve with sweet edibles is first waved before the girl and then at the back as has been said afore. This is done thrice. This is followed by '*Nirainazhi Suthuthal*' in which a local measure full of paddy, with a burning wick placed on the top, is waved before the girl thrice. Then the girl wears the dress presented by the maternal uncle. Then a mock marriage is conducted to make the girl shed her shyness and put her in a humour that would agree with the pleasant atmosphere around. One of small tender boys of the maternal uncle who is usually called the 'Murai Mappillai" is seated with the girl and a few mock ceremonies of a marriage are gone through. This is mere a fun and a farce, intended to make the girl aware that she is no longer a child, but an adult woman fit to enter the portals of married life. The mock couple undergo the '*Nalangu*' ceremony in which they are garlanded and smeared with sandal paste. Then the girl prostrates before the maternal uncle who makes some cash presents and ties the auspicious articles to the end of her saree. This is followed by the presents made by the other relatives and friends which are usually sarees and blouses and other household and toilet articles.

Death ceremonies

37. The dead among Vellalas is either buried or burnt. When death occurs in a house the relatives are informed through the village menials. Before the funeral, a series of rites are gone through. First, the corpse is bathed by the water brought from the village tank. The fetching of water is called the 'Neermalai' ceremony, in which, the chief mourner, usually the eldest son of the deceased brings water in a new pot accompanied by other mourners. As they come back from the tank, a white cloth is held as a canopy over the pot. If the deceased is a married man, the widow also takes bath along with the corpse in such a way that the water from the widow flows over the dead corpse. The grandsons of the deceased hold the burning torches called 'Nei Pantham'. They also apply oil to the corpse with the back of their palms. Meanwhile some elder women in the family conduct the '*Sithevi Irakkuthal*' ceremony. She takes a measure full of paddy, with a wick lamp on it and goes round the corpse thrice and gives it to the

married female head of the household. When the corpse is bathed, the 'kodi mathal' ceremony is performed. A new pair of cloth, white in case of male, and red in case of female, is worn on the corpse.

The corpse is taken to the burial ground in a bier in sitting posture or lying posture, accompanied by the mourners carrying the funeral pot full of water. Some others carry incense, and funeral fire. At the funeral ground the last homage is paid to the corpse during the 'Vaikku Arisi Poduthal' ceremony. In this ceremony, the mourner and other attendants drop a pinch of rice on the mouth or in the sieve over the corpse. The chief mourner drops it last. Then he goes round the corpse with the funeral pot full of water on his head thrice. At the end of every round, a hole is made on the pot by a barber with the tip of a sickle and finally it is broken at the side where the head of the corpse is laid. If buried, the chief mourner throws the first sod of earth as soon as the body is lowered into the pit. If cremated, the funeral celebrant sets fire to the pyre with his face averted from the corpse. When the rites are over in the cremation ground, the chief mourner gets his head shaven to mark his mourning which lasts for 10 days. After burial the assembled people are treated to a small meal with vegetables and a green called '*Agathi*'. The following day after burial or cremation, the '*Kuzhi Aththuthal*' ceremony is observed. The mourners visit the burial ground and pour milk on the burial or cremation spot; cereal seeds and other flower seeds are sown on the spot, and oblations are done for the soul of the departed to rest in peace. They leave a burning mud lamp at the spot. At home, the parents-in-law of the funeral celebrant incur the expenditure on that day.

The mourning period is kept for ten days during which the family members abstain from meat. Every day the female members of the house collect together at the spot where the deceased breathed his last and weep aloud. During this mourning period, food is offered every day to the bereaved family in turn by near relatives. On the tenth day, the mourning is kept up throughout the night. On the eleventh day the expiatory ceremony is conducted. It is a rather painful ceremony to the wife of the deceased who sees the rest of her life as colourless blank. It is a day when she is reminded of the cruelty of fate and the extremely secondary position she is going to occupy thereafter in the social fabric among the womenfolk in general. On that day, she is made to put on all her ornaments, flowers etc. and after the observations of a few minor rites, an elder widow removes her Thali and drops it into a cup of cold milk. None of the married women is allowed to witness the scene since it is supposed to be inauspicious. At the burial ground, a Brahmin priest performs 'Punniathanam' ceremony. The grave is washed and four pots of water are placed in four corners. Small coins are kept immersed in water. The priest ignites the holy fire and does oblations for the repose of the soul. He invests the funeral celebrant with sacred thread known as 'Poonool' across his chest and a ring made of "Durba" grass is worn by the celebrant, which he casts away during the bath which he subsequently takes. On the following day, the mourners take oil bath and eat a non-vegetarian feast.

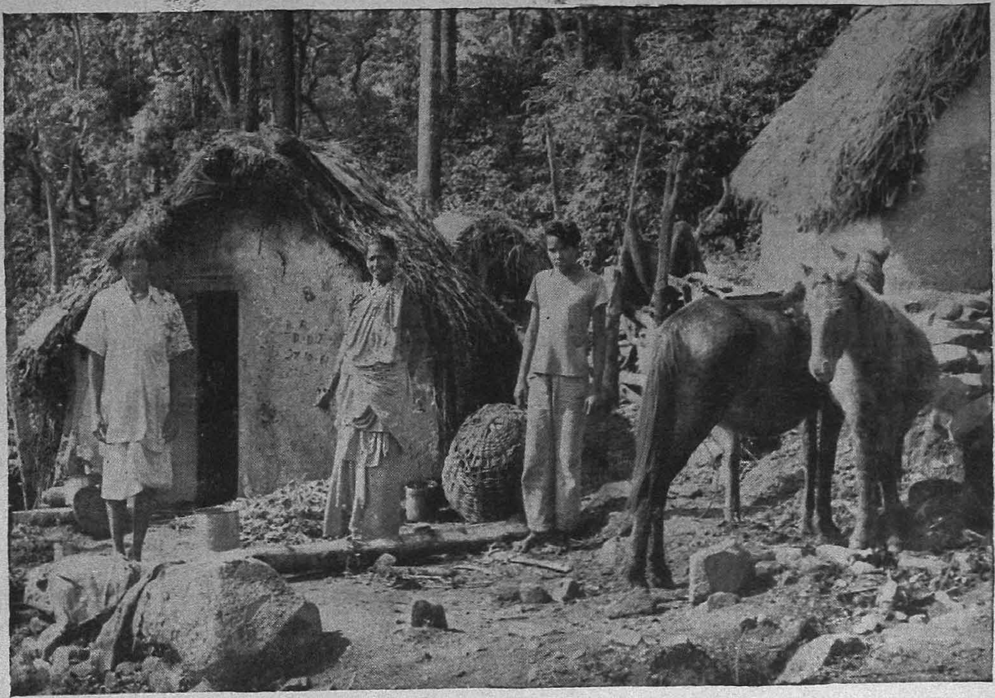
Now follows the ceremony known as '*Urumalkattuthal*' which usually takes place in the evening extending into the night. The people belonging to the wife's side of the celebrant decorate the head of the chief celebrant with a long costly towel by tying it on his head in several windings. The result is a sort of crude turban.

Naidus

38. Naidus, a Telugu speaking people form the second largest community among the caste-Hindus that inhabit this village. They account for about 18.18 per cent of the total households and 17.45 per cent of the total population. Traditionally they belong to the Seddinaickenvalli village, 19 miles away from Sirumalai. They migrated to this village long ago seeking their livelihood.

Origin

39. Naidus are commonly known as Balijas. The word Balija is a Telugu word. Mr. Francis in the Madras Census Report, 1901 describes them as being the chief Telugu trading caste, scattered throughout all the parts of the Presidency. It is said to have two main sub-divisions, Desa (or kosa, a fort) and Peta (street). The first of these include those whose ancestors are supposed to have been the Balija (Nayak) kings of Madura, Tanjore and Vijayanagar or provincial governors in those kingdoms; and to the second belong those like the Gazulu (bangle sellers) or Perike (salt sellers) who live by trade.



A Naidu family – The hut is situated on the slope of the hill,

A Naidu woman

In the districts of Madurai and Tanjore, the Balijas are known as Vadugas and the Sirumalai Naidus also call themselves Vadugas. They are also commonly called Kavarais by the other caste people. The Balijas in this part claim themselves as descendants of the Nayaks and proudly declare themselves as *Kshatriyas*. They trace their ancestry to the Kasyapa gotra. About the claims of Kasyapa group of Balijas, there are many number of disputes. They are not admitted by the other sects of Balijas as belonging to their caste and consider these Kshatriyas as an off-shoot of the Kapus. Referring to this controversy, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes, "Concerning the origin of this caste, several traditions exist, but the most probable is that which presents them as a recent off-shoot of the Kapu or Reddi caste. The caste is rather a mixed one for they will admit without much scruple, persons who have been expelled from their proper caste or who are the results of the irregular unions. The bulk of the Balijas are now engaged in cultivation and this accounts for so many having returned Kapu as their main caste for *kapu* is also a common Telugu word used for a ryot. It is not improbable that there was once a closer connection than now between the Kapus and Balijas and the claim of the Balijas to belong to the Kapu caste may have a foundation in fact".

According to Mr. Thurston the origin of the Balijas is as follows: "The name Balija is said to be derived from the Sanskrit *Bali* (sacrifice) and *ja* (born) signifying that the Balijas owe their origin to the performance of a yagam. The legend is current that on one occasion Siva wanted his consort Parvathi to appear before him in all her beauty and glory. When she stood before him, fully decorated, he laughed and said that she was not as charming as she might be. On this, she prayed that Siva would help her to become so. From his braid of hair, Siva created a being who descended on the earth, bearing a number of bangles and turmeric paste with which Parvathi adorned herself. Siva being greatly pleased with her appearance, told her to look at herself in a looking glass". This being who brought the bangles is believed to have been the ancestor of the Gazula Balijas. The other tradition says that at the request of Parvathi to Brahma to make her more attractive, the latter ordered her to make penance (*Tapas*). From the sacrificial fire rose a being, leading a donkey laden with heaps of bangles, turmeric, palm leaf rolls for the ears, black beads, sandal powder, a comb, perfumes etc. From this Maha Purusha who thus sprang from a sacrifice (Bali) the Balijas derived their origin and name.

40. There are many sub-divisions among Balijas, viz., Gazula, Gamdavallu, Kavarai, Linga, Panchama Tota, Ralla, Pagadala, Pusa, Racha and Vyasa. The 1901 Census Report classified the sub-divisions of Jakkulas, Adappa, Santa Kavarai and Ravur as Balija community. The Balijas also have exogamous septs and gotras. The following are some of the septs found among them. Tupakala (Musket), samudram (ocean), pappu (split pulse), gantle (bell), puli (tiger), balli (lizard), avula (cow), gandham (Sandal paste), jilakkara (cumin seeds), miriyala (pepper) etc.

Only a very few Naidus of Sirumalai are aware of the different sects that exist in their community. Some of our Naidu informants belong to the Jilakkara sept, but they are not sufficiently well informed to reason out their being called so. They are Vaishnavites by religion and ardent worshippers of Lord Venkatachalapathi. They paint their forehead with a sacred trident mark in red and white. Their womenfolk are more religious minded and observe fast on Saturdays. Such pious women often take the lead in performing the *Nalangu* rites on auspicious occasions. They have Angalamman, a demon goddess as their clan deity (Kula Deivam) to which vows and oblations are offered during festivals.

Marriage ceremonies

41. As in the marriages of other communities, betrothal is the formal starting point. It is the initiating ritual. At the time of the betrothal ceremony, the prospective bridegroom's party proceed to the house of the girl, carrying the following auspicious articles in an odd number of plates or trays, usually 5 or 7—Mustard, fengugreek (Trigovella Foenum Graecum), cumin seeds, curds, jaggery, dhal, balls of condiments, coconut, salt, plantains, flowers, new cloth, black bead, ornaments etc. The bride's party and the groom's party confirm their mutual consent to enter into the marital alliance by exchanging pansupari and coconut. Now the girl is seated on a plank and garlanded. The bridegroom's party then puts on marks of sandal paste on her forehead and cheeks. This ceremony is loosely called *Nalangu* though Nalangu proper should form part of the regular marriage itself. Now she is presented with new clothes by the groom's party. Wearing this, she once again sits on the plank and then the bridegroom's sister or a near married

female relative of the bridegroom ties the *Karugumani Pottu* (a string of black beads) round her neck. Though this is not the actual tying of the Thali which takes place only during marriage, this is a very near substitute for it and this brings the commitment of both the parties to a high degree. When the prospective bride wears the Karugumani, almost half the marriage is deemed to have been celebrated and the sanctity attached to this ceremony is indeed very great, and the seeking of any fresh alliance by either party under any circumstances is almost ruled out and any individual or family with a sensitive conscience recoils at the very thought of it. This Karugumani forges a rigid bond between the prospective bride and the groom which is next in importance or sanctity only to the actual marriage itself. The date for the marriage is fixed on the day of the betrothal invariably. That day itself several handfuls of different cereal grains are sown in a place, so that the saplings may be ready for *Molaippari* on the day of marriage. Molaippari consists of a number of earthen pots containing cereal saplings which young damsels carry on the day of marriage and which are then used for decorative purposes.

42. The marriage commonly takes place in the bridegroom's house. But on occasions, if the circumstances are unavoidable, it would be held in the bride's house also. But most marriages take place in public choultries in Dindigul. The reasons why most marriages are held in Dindigul have already been dealt with elsewhere.

A Brahmin priest officiates at the marriage who conducts the different ceremonies in vedic style, often in front of the sacred fire. The marriage ceremonies commence with the '*Muhurthakal Naduthal*' (hoisting of the milk post). The milk post or the Muhurthakal consists of a green bamboo with branches of Odhiyan tree (*Odina Wadier*) fastened to it. The milk post is tied to one of the poles of the marriage dais proper by the bridegroom, assisted by an odd number of married men. A pooja is then offered to it and an iron ring, a string of cotton and wool twisted together known as *Kanganam* are now attached to it. The marriage dais called *Manavarai* is usually a beautiful handywork, decorated with hanging festoons, bearing plantain trees, electric illuminations etc. Before it are spread the *Arasani pots* or the coloured pots with water, trays laden with auspicious articles etc. The bridegroom is led to the marriage booth or the Manavarai by his brother-in-law. The priest ties the Kanganam, i.e., the yellow string intertwined with black wool and thread with a piece of turmeric tied to it and a chaplet known as *Basingam* on the forehead. Then the bridegroom performs a small worship of his ancestors and duly receives the marriage apparel from the priest. A sect among the Balijas wear the marriage apparel dipped in turmeric water and this is prepared by some married woman. The ancestor worship being concluded, all the finger nails of the arms and the feet are clipped and trimmed. Then he goes to the Pillaiyar temple to offer worship and there breaks a coconut at the temple. Here he is presented with a pair of sandals and an umbrella by the bride's party. The bridegroom is then led to the marriage pandhal, his brother-in-law washes his feet and after throwing flowers and turmeric-stained rice over him, he puts the toe-rings (Minji) on the toes of the bridegroom. While the bridegroom is away in the temple, the bride is decorated with the Kanganam and Basingam.

Tharai varthal

43. On the arrival of the bridegroom to the marriage booth, the *Tharai varthal* ceremony is performed. This consists in the parents of the bride pouring water into the hands of the bridegroom and exchanging Thamboolam (betel leaves and nuts) with his parents. This signifies the giving away of the girl to the bridegroom as a sacred gift. Then the Purohit, i.e., the officiating Brahmin priest offers pooja to Vigneswara and the Bottu (marriage badge attached to a string) is blessed by the elders assembled and handed to the bridegroom by the priest. The bridegroom and the bride now remain separated by a screen, held between them by some men and women present. The bridegroom places his right foot on that of the bride and ties the Thali around her neck. The bride also wears the '*Appan Thali*' which signifies that she has rights and claims in her parents' house too. The couple then exchange seats and turmeric-stained rice is showered on them by the elders and others present. Now a total of seven married men and women do the '*Nalangu*' in which sandal paste and vermilion are applied to the bridal couple on the forehead. Then a tray with betel leaves, a lump of turmeric paste and burning camphor is waved before them. This is known as '*Aarathi Eduthal*'. This concluded, the couple then apply to each other's forehead sandal paste and vermilion. Next, they go round the marriage dais thrice and at the close of the second round, the bride places her right foot on a grinding stone which is kept ready for the purpose. At the end of the third round, the couple are directed to look at the star Arunthathi

(Pole star). The significance of this ceremony is that the bride should cultivate the highest womanly virtues and it is also an invocation of the blessings of the Goddess '*Arunthathi*' for a life of uninterrupted conjugal felicity. As it is well known, Arunthathi is a woman highly celebrated in the Hindu puranas for her chastity. This ceremony cites her as an example for imitation by the bride. This is followed by some ceremonies which are nothing but light-hearted merry-making by the friends and relatives of both the parties. One of the ceremonies may be described here. Into one of the marriage pots which is full of water a pap-bowl and a ring are put and the couple are asked to put their hands into it and snatch anything that comes to their hand. It is a sort of funny sport. If the bridegroom happens to take the pap-bowl, the child that is going to be born for them will be a boy. If he happens to take the ring, it will be a girl. In another ceremony, the bridal couple play a mock-imitation of domestic life. The surrounding womenfolk make fun of the couple and the groom is compelled to call his wife by name. They also have a mock ploughing ceremony. Nuptial takes place on the day of the marriage itself and before entering into the nuptial room, the bridal couple are stopped by the groom's sister at the threshold and compels them to give her a promise to take her daughter if a son is born or to give their daughter to her son if a daughter is born. In fact, the sister while extracting the promise from the bridal pair, uses the words that their coral (daughter) should be given to her pearl (son) or vice versa. On an auspicious day, the bridal couple are invited to the bride's house where they are again made to undergo a few more ceremonies on a small nominal scale with the usual Nalangu rites performed to the couple. This is known as '*Maru Veettu Kalyanam*'

Birth

44. The girl is invited to her parent's house on the seventh month of her conception and the occasion is marked by entertaining the husband, his family people and his relatives with certain conventional preparations of food which include among others curd rice and tamarind rice. When she is in her parents' house, two important ceremonies known as '*Poo Mudippu*' and '*Valai Kappu*' are conducted, sometimes on a grand scale if the financial status of the party permits. Even in the case of not so well-to-do families, these ceremonies are supposed to be of some importance and conducted with some eclat. '*Poo Mudippu*' consists in decorating the girl with flowers and '*Valai Kappu*' is a ceremony when she is bedecked with new bangles. These two ceremonies are conducted separately on different occasions to which friends and relatives, mostly womenfolk, are invited. A sumptuous feeding also of the invitees takes place and these ceremonies are meant to ward off the evil eye and to earn the well wishes and blessings of the relatives and friends.

Delivery entails pollution for 30 days during which period the mother and the new-born are kept aloof in a separate room and the mother is fed on a light food and the diet is restricted. They are invited into the house after the conclusion of the purificatory ceremony known as '*Puniathanam*' conducted on the 30th day in which very often a Purohit officiates. The naming is also done on the same day in consultation with the family astrologer who suggests a number of names starting with a particular letter auspicious to the star in which the child was born. But naming the child with reference to the stellar position is done only in very orthodox families with great respect for horoscope. During the naming ceremony, the child is kept on an elder's lap, preferably the father's, and its tongue is sweetened by honey with the help of a gold ring and its name is loudly proclaimed thrice. Sometimes relatives and friends make cash presentations and occasionally presents in kind. But many ordinary families dispense with a ceremony for this purpose and they simply give a name, any name they like, any name that they fancy and it is done on any day they like.

45. The female children undergo the ear-boring ceremony normally during their third or fourth year. It is again a ceremony that involves some expense and is marked by a gathering of relatives and friends and accompanied by a feast. But the present tendency is to minimise the scale of expense and to conduct it in the most informal manner. In some cases it is never intimated to anybody at all except to very close kith and kin. In certain cases even this too is dispensed with and the ear-boring is done as a matter of course.

Vidyarambam

46. The child is admitted in a school in its fifth year normally. The child is made to sit before the teacher and a '*Dhakshina*' or a monetary present is made to the teacher and a plate of betel leaves and nuts, coconuts, fruits and flowers and some edibles are placed before him. The teacher offers an impromptu prayer to Lord Vigneswara and makes the child write with a pencil on the slate the first alphabets, himself holding its hand and writing the letters. Before that he pronounces the letters himself and asks the child to

repeat them. In some cases the teacher chants a few lines of holy invocation from the sacred texts and asks the child to repeat them, and the child repeats them with the help of the teacher.

Puberty

47. The attainment of puberty opens a new chapter in the life history of a girl. She now receives the seal of nature that qualifies her for family life. The exact time of the attainment of puberty is astrologically important and many people consider this time more significant than even the time of her birth.

Formerly the news of the attainment of puberty was communicated to even remote places and to even distant friends and relatives. Now it is intimated only to very close friends and relatives.

As soon as the fact is known, the girl is given a bath by the mother, assisted by five or seven married women and the wife of the maternal uncle of the girl takes the dominant part. The girl is then made to change her clothes, and a few rites follow.

The attainment of puberty entails pollution for sixteen days during which the girl is kept in a separate room, or more often in a thatched hut usually built by the maternal uncle of the girl who takes the leading part in it: This is now-a-days becoming merely symbolical. The girl is kept in this hut or dormitary during the period of pollution and every day she is given rich spicy nutritious food by the families of her relatives in turn who bring the food to her apartment.

During the last eight days of purification, the girl is beautifully decorated in different attires depicting the various Gods and Goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, along with a small boy of her maternal uncle. A few small farces are conducted to put the girl and the gathering in good humour and impart to the house an atmosphere of cheer and gaiety. But these are ceremonies that smack of old by - gone days and the people at present with a matter - of - fact and businesslike attitude, are gradually giving up these customs.

On the sixteenth day, the purification ceremony is conducted, where a Brahmin priest officiates. Some well-to - do people send out printed invitations to friends and relatives and a big gathering meets amid melodious pipes and drummings. The girl is given a purificatory bath and the house already white-washed for the occasion glistens with a glow along with the costly colourful sarees worn by the women present and the shining vessels cleaned for the purpose. The priest makes pooja and oblations to Lord Vigneswara and sanctifies the house by sprinkling holy water from a vessel held in his hand with the help of a mango leaf. After the bath, the girl is adorned in new clothes presented to her by the maternal uncle and every care is taken to make her look a paragon of beauty since that provides occasion for the visitors present to know something of the physical appearance of the girl and quite possibly many in the gathering may be prospective bridegrooms, or from their families. Now, seven married women living prosperously with their husbands perform the Nalangu, Adaisuthu and Arathi ceremonies. The last ceremony is meant to ward off the effects of the evil eye. The relatives then make differet kinds of presents to the girl and the invitees are then treated to a lavish dinner.

Death ceremonies

48. Almost all that has been said regarding the death ceremonies of Vellalas applies to Naidus also. But the head of the bier constructed by the Naidus to take the dead to the grave resembles the hood of a cobra. The Naidu women do not take to wearing white sarees after the death of their husbands, as is the case with Vellalas and most other communities. It is almost invariably the Brahmin priest that removes the Thali of the widow unlike in Vellala community where it is done by an elderly woman.

Other social customs

49. Naidus are Vaishnavites and paint their forehead with the trident mark in red and white which is called '*Namam*'. They are the particular worshippers of the deity Venkatachalapathi in Tirupathi Hills in Andhra Pradesh. Their clan deity (Kula Deivam) is Angalamman, a female Goddess. Widow marriage and divorce are not allowed. But polygamy is found to be quite common though in Sirumalai we do not see many cases. They enter into consanguineous marriages, the preferable choice being the children of maternal uncle aud paternal aunt. Our enquiry shows that among 27 marriages in twenty households in this village, as many as eleven are consanguineous marriages, five being with maternal uncle's children, four with paternal aunt's children and two with own sister's daughters.

Other Caste Hindus

50. The other minor caste Hindus are represented by Konar, Valaiyar, Nadar, Asari, Pandaram, Agamu-

daiyar. Brahmin, Oddar, Pandithar, Maravar, Piramalaikallan, Naicker, Gounder and Chettiar. Except the communities of Konar, Valayan and Nadar, somewhat numerically significant compared to the other communities in this list, all the other castes are negligible in number.

Konars

51. Konars or Yadhavas are the shepherd caste. They form a total of 73 persons in the village and are distributed in seventeen households. They are generally called Idaiyars and there are many sub-divisions among the Yadhavas. They are the Kalkatti, Pasi-Idaiyars (being called so from their custom of wearing sixteen glass beads to their Thali), the Semban Idaiyars (named after Siva), Kallar Idayars (named after Kallar), Podumattu Idayars (of Tirunelveli origin) and the Pancharamkatti Idaiyars (called so after the neck ornaments worn by their women). They assume titles like Konar, Pillai, Pongadan and Karaiyalan. They are Vaishnavites by religion and Sri Krishna is their caste deity. Since Krishna was also the divine tender of cattle, the Yadhavas claim a social superiority over other communities and probably call themselves as Vaishnava Brahmins. They trace a sort of puranic kinship with Lord Krishna and glory in it. Brahmin priests officiate at their weddings. The Thali is tied by the groom's sister to the bride. They also observe some other peculiar customs in their marriages. The sister of the bridegroom collects the bridegroom's gold from the bride's party. Likewise, the bridegroom pays a similar gift to the bride's party when he goes to the bride's house. Divorce and widow marriages are prohibited. Their dead except infants are cremated.

Valaiyans

52. There are thirteen Valaiyan households in Sirumalai with a total population of 71 persons. Traditionally, they are a hunting caste and derive their name from *Valai*, a net by which they net games in jungles. But in Sirumalai, most of them are engaged as plantation labourers. They have four endogamous sub-divisions among them, viz. the Vahini, the Valattu, the Karadi and Kangu. The Kangu Valaiyans are further sub-divided into Pasi Katti or the weavers of bead chain for Thali, and the Karai Katti whose women wear horse-hair necklets. In the village, the Valaiyans style themselves as maniyams or headman. They suffix a honorific title *Ambalam* to their names.

Valaiyans of this village have their social ceremonies similar to those of other communities in the village. Among them consanguineous marriages are preferred and a Valaiyan according to his caste tradition has the privilege to marry his maternal uncle's daughter. The bridegroom should obtain the previous consent of his maternal uncle to marry someone other than the latter's daughter. Marriage invariably takes place at night and the bride's sister ties the Thali round the neck of the bride. Widow remarriage and divorce are allowed among Valaiyans. However, in divorce, the initiating party should pay a fine to the caste Panchayat. On the attainment of puberty, the Valaiyan girl lives in a secluded hut and young companions of her age often sing songs. Their dead are buried with similar rites found among other communities in the village. Among them the last homage to the deceased is paid by the widow also. She goes round the body thrice with a pot of water on her shoulder and breaks it down at the third end pleading the departed soul to leave her and the children in peace. Valaiyans are demon worshippers and Veeru Chinnammal, Karuppuswamy, Palani Andavar are their principal deities.

Nadars

53. There are eleven households of Nadars in the village. The traditional occupation of Nadars as a community was formerly toddy tapping. Now they have taken to trade and commerce and in some places agriculture. The Nadars of Sirumalai, almost all of them, are engaged as plantation labourers in a big estate here known as St. Joseph's Estate. Most of them are migrants from the plains. The Nadars are also known as Shanans which title has gradually fallen into disuse and which is greatly resented by the members of the community. Economically they are now one of the most forward and soundest communities in Tamil Nad. Cultivation and trade are now their chief pursuits. The attitude of the society towards them has now vastly changed and the Nadars are now treated with courtesy and consideration. The Nadars claim themselves as coming of a Kshatriya stock, i.e., a ruling community.

In their marriages, an elderly member of the caste is in charge of guiding and administering the various rites and ceremonies. The ceremonies are more or less similar to those that prevail in other communities. The Thali is handed to the barber who takes it amidst

the people present for their blessings. The Thali is then handed back to the bridegroom by the elderly man administering the ceremonies and the bridegroom ties it round the neck of the bride, assisted by his sister. In Nadar marriages, the barber has got an important though a menial role to play. In some of the old fashioned orthodox type of marriages, he sings greeting songs to the couple, holds an umbrella over the couple during the processions etc. In the matter of social customs and ceremonies, the Nadars of Sirumalai have adjusted themselves to their local surroundings.

Naickers

54. The Naickers of this village belong to the Telugu caste, and they are commonly known as Kambalathar or Thottiyars. They speak a highly corrupt Telugu. They are mainly cultivators and in the village, there are about thirteen Naickers. Nine of them are working as plantation labourers and the remaining four are working as plantation managers in a subordinate capacity. There is one Naicker individual who is an Apiarist in Government service in the village. These Naickers are said to be originally migrants from a region north of the river Thungabathra, extending upto Vijayanagar and that they migrated to the Tamil parts because of the persecution of Muslim conquerors. It is said that they came down to Madurai district during the Nayak rule. Their caste head is known as Mettu Naicker. There are three endogamous sections in the community, i e., Vekkilli, Thokala and Yerrakolla, each one having many sub-divisions among themselves. Among the Yerrakolla, a curious custom is that cumbu, a lower sort of grain, must be cooked on the betrothal day and 7 people belonging to 7 different septs should be fed and presented with betel leaves and nuts and some money. On the wedding day, the bride and bridegroom are seated on a plank on the marriage dais and milk is sprinkled over them by the people. A few hours later, the bridegroom takes his seat in the pandhal where the bride is brought in the arms of her maternal uncle. The Mettu Naicker or the headmen then links together the little fingers of the bridal couple and tells them to exchange rings which they do accordingly. This is the binding portion of the ceremony and no Bottu (Thali) is tied round the bride's neck.

Among the Vekkilliars, the marriage customs are somewhat different. They construct two huts in an open space at some distance from the confines of the village. A pandhal of some pretension is erected in front of these two huts which is roofed with leafy twigs of the Kongu tree On the following day, the bride and the bridegroom are taken to the huts, the bride being sometimes carried in the arms of her maternal uncle. They now offer worship to the illustrious among their ancestors who are represented by new clothes, folded and placed on a tray. The bridegroom's sister ties the Bottu on the bride's neck inside her hut in front of which cumbu is scattered. Betel and some coins are placed on the bride's lap. On the third day, the bridegroom, mounted on a horse goes round the huts three times accompanied by the marriage pots. He then enters into the bride's hut, and she is carried in the arms of the cousin of the bridegroom thrice round the huts. The couple now sit on planks and they are asked by the Mettu Naicker to link their little fingers together. After this, the couple enter the bridegroom's hut and perform a mock ploughing ceremony. Coming out from the hut, they take up a child and carry it three times around the hut.

At the wedding among the Thottiyas, a fowl is killed near the marriage dais and with its blood, a mark is made on the foreheads of the bride and the groom on their entry into the booth.

At a Thottiya's funeral, the bier is carried to the cremation ground by a Chakkilian and the pyre is lighted not by the sons but by the relations with whom marriage could be contracted (*Sammandhi*). The Thottiyans piously observe ancestoral worship and their ancestors are represented by a number of stones set up somewhere within the village boundaries. Such places are called *Malai*. When a member of the caste dies, some of the bones, it is said, are buried in these places along with a coin and a stone is planted on this path. The stones are arranged in an irregular circle.

Sati was formerly practised among the Thottiyans and their two caste Goddesses Jakkamma and Bommabba are deification of women who committed Sati. Every four years a festival is held in their honour when a bull race is also arranged and the owner of the winning bull given a prize and the first betel and nut. Their caste God is Perumal who is worshipped in the form of a grinding stone.

The Naickers of Sirumali cannot be said to observe all these customs meticulously. They are people living a hand-to-mouth existence. These elaborate

customs are gradually giving place to simpler and informal ones and sometimes they are hurriedly and symbolically gone through.

Gounder

55. Gounder are otherwise called pallis or the vanniars. They are also known by different names such as Padayatchi, Nayanar, Naicker etc. They have among them different sub-divisions such as Rudra Vanniar, Krishna Vanniar, Sambu Vanniar, Brahma Vanniar, Indra Vanniar etc. They form a negligible minority in the population of Sirumalai. Widow remarriage and divorce are permitted among them. Since their number is microscopically small in this village, it is felt unnecessary to dilate upon their various customs and ceremonies and their social life.

Other communities

56. There are three households of Chettiars in the village and they are engaged as plantation workers in two big estates. There are two households each of Asari and Pandaram. Asari is the title assumed by the people belonging to the Kammalar caste, a traditional artisan community. The Pandarams are a sort of priests offering poojas in the temples and they are usually in charge of small temples and its affairs. One of the two households of Pandarams is employed in a temple in the village. The communities of Brahmin, Oddar, Pandithar, Maravar, Agamudaiyar and Piramalaikallar are each represented by a single solitary household. The Brahmin household is that of a teacher in the village. The members belonging to the Oddar, Piramalaikallar, Maravar and Agamudaiyar households are also plantation workers. Some of them are migrants from the nearby villages and taluks.

Scheduled Castes

57. There is a total of 113 households of Scheduled Castes in the village, distributed among Chakkiliars, Pallars, Parayans and Kuravans. The Chakkiliars form an absolute majority of 102 households and inhabit exclusively the hamlet known as Chakkiliapatti. They account for 26·25% of the village population.

Chakkiliars

58. Chakkiliars are by tradition leather workers. They are supposed to be immigrants from the Telugu and Kannada districts and talk a very corrupt and mutilated form of Telugu or Kannada. Socially they belong to the lowest strata of society and are considered untouchables. Economically they are at a rock-bottom level and their life is a hard and weary pull. They are always shabbily clad; their daily bread is their daily problem. Many of them are strangers even to elementary comforts. Though their traditional occupation is leather work, they have taken to different kinds of menial jobs in many places as workers in fields, tenders of cattle, and carriers of loads. Now-a-days in most villages Chakkiliars are employed as village menials under the Village Officers and in Sirumalai one Chakkilian is employed as Vettiyan.

Normally they are Saivites, but they worship the demon Gods and Goddesses like Muniandy, Karuppannan, Kaliamman, Muthalamman and Madurai Veeran etc. In Sirumalai, the Chakkiliars, almost all of them, follow not their traditional occupation of leather work, but are engaged as plantation workers in estates. But this does not interrupt the marital commerce they have with the Chakkiliars that have taken to leather work in the plains. The Awaram plant (*Cassia Auriculata*) is held in great religious veneration by them and before the Thali is tied to the bride in a marriage, it is tied to a branch of this plant. It is supposed to carry a sanctity of its own, unequalled and unsurpassed. The Chakkiliars of this village, as elsewhere, are entitled to remove the dead cattle and make a feast of them. They eat beef, pork and the flesh of other animals which are a taboo among the caste Hindus and which are strictly prohibited and contemptuously proscribed by them.

Marriage

59. The Chakkiliars cannot afford costly ceremonies, but still they have ceremonies of their own, some of which are simple and some very complex and elaborate. But the youth among the Chakkiliars that are now coming into the fore who keep more or less regular contact with the urban town of Dindigul down below in the plains are imbibing new ideas as a consequence of which they take sometimes a scoffing attitude towards the elderly people that belong to the old school and live an out-moded life.

On the day of betrothal, the consent of the proposed alliance is formally confirmed by the bridegrooms party paying to the bride's party the bride price (parisam) of Rs. 10.50 along with other presents. There is an exchange of pansupari and sometimes a

mutual smearing of sandal paste between the two parties. The marriage usually takes place at the bride's house to which the groom is conducted by his prospective brother-in-law under an umbrella. At the threshold of the house, the groom is stopped and the bride joins him fully decorated in her wedding drapery. They are both led to the marriage pandhal. The marriage ceremony is conducted by an elderly man of the community and the Thali is tied to the bride by the groom's sister after it receives the blessings from the people assembled.

Consummation of marriage is conducted on the same day. The day following the marriage, the bridal couple go to a public water source, say a river or well and the bride is asked to drop betel leaves into the well. If the leaves drop on the reverse, the child that is going to be born would be a female. The bridal couple are then asked to sow nine kinds of grains (*Thavaram*) near the well. At home, some other ceremonies are undergone which are of a merry-making character. A big earthen pot of yellow turmeric water is kept by the girl's maternal uncle. The bridal couple are forced into a sportive mood and made to sprinkle water at each other. While the by-standing men and women clap their hands in ripples of laughter, all manner of fun and frolic is indulged in. This is followed by a mock ploughing ceremony. Since cultivation is also a time-honoured occupation to which they have an instinctive affiliation, they do cultivation also apart from the usual leather work.

Among Chakkiliars monogamy is the practice, but polygamy is allowed. Divorce is allowed, but only after an adjudication by the Caste Panchayat and the initiator should surrender an amount equal to the Parisam, to the other party. The female offspring, on divorce, is left with the mother. During the course of ten years, there are more than twenty cases of divorce in this village. Though their moral code relating to sex is not apparently so very rigorous, we cannot say that they have no moral scruples in the matter. Quite a few cases of adultery have been brought to the notice of the caste council during the past ten years. The council, after an elaborate enquiry, pronounces a verdict and imposes fine on the offenders according to the gravity of the crime. If both are unmarried, the male is invariably compelled to marry the girl.

Birth

60. On conception, a Chakkilia girl is invited to her parents' house on the ninth month with presentations of some edible and some food articles made to her husband and his family. Formerly delivery was attended by an elderly woman among Chakkiliars. But now a maternity assistant attends delivery cases. Pollution lasts for twelve days and on the day of termination of pollution, the mother and baby are given a purificatory bath with turmeric water and the mother is given good nourishing food. For about a month during the post-natal period, the mother is given country medicines and particularly a semi-medicinal preparation called '*Kayam Karupatti Kazhi*' which is something like a pudding.

The child depends on breast-feeding for more than a year, sometimes even for two years. After two years, effort is taken to keep the child away from the breast. But the usual method to keep the child off is to apply margosa oil on the nipples to prevent suckling. The child is given hard diet like meat etc., only after four years.

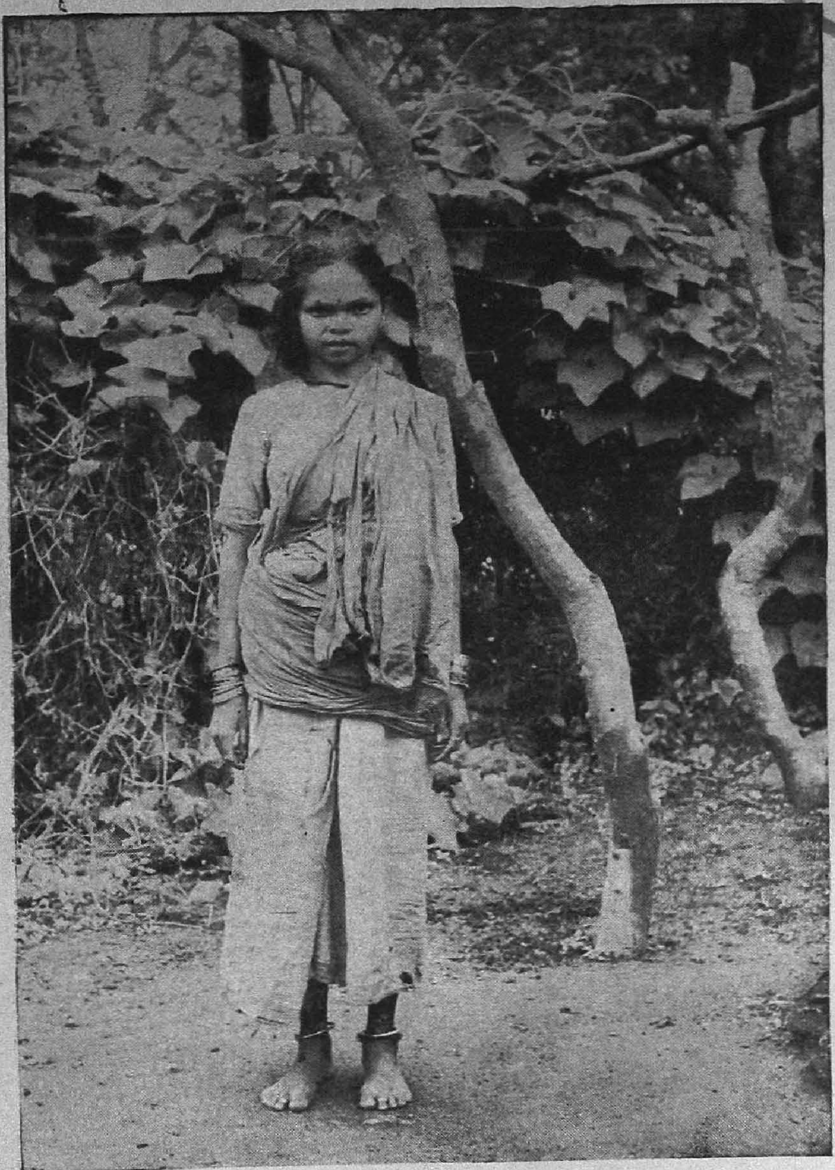
The naming of a Chakkilia child is done as a matter of course without any ceremony. The name of some demon God or Goddess such as Karuppan, Munian, Sadaiyandi or Muthammal, Kaliamman, Palaniammal etc., is given. The ear-boring too is scarcely ceremonial and mostly informal.

Puberty

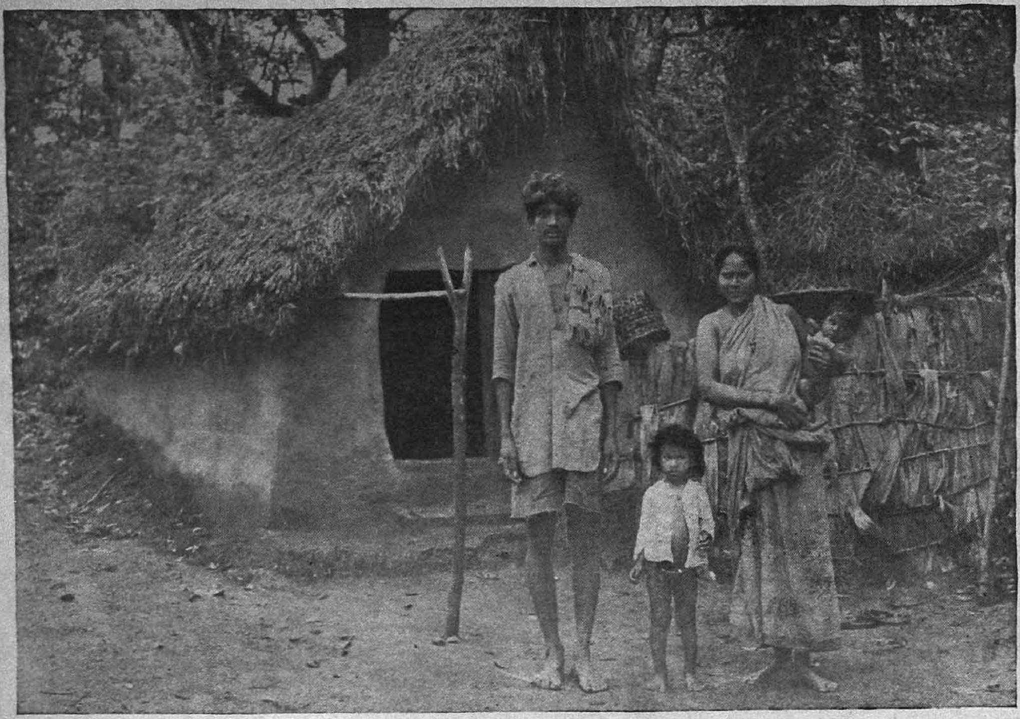
61. The girl on the attainment of her puberty is kept secluded in a hut for twelve days and given substantial food like '*Ulunthukashi*' and puttu. The hut is made of green bamboos which is erected by the maternal uncle. Pollution is terminated on the twelfth day by a purificatory bath being given to the girl and the occasion is marked by a small feast and presents are made to the girl by the relatives on that occasion. As in other communities, the maternal uncle plays a dominant role in the ceremony. In many of these ceremonies, the Chakkiliars resemble the caste Hindus, but only the cermonies are on a smaller scale and sometimes on a nominal scale because of their extreme economic backwardness.

Death

62. The Chakkiliars dispose of their dead both by burial and cremation and in the observation of death ceremonies, they largely resemble the caste Hindus.



A Chakkilia girl — Thandai (Anklets) worn by her, can be seen.



A Kurava family.

General

63. Among Chakkiliars, the bridegroom may be younger than the bride. Girls are not usually married before puberty. Their young women are considered very beautiful and it is a woman of this caste who is generally selected for the coarser form of Sakthi worship. As has been observed by Thurston, they indulge very freely in intoxicating liquors and will eat any flesh. Abbe Dubois writes in *Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies* "The Chucklers or Cobblers are considered inferior to the Parayas all over the Peninsula. They are more addicted to drunkenness and debauchery. Their orgies take place principally in the evening and their villages resound, far into the night, with the yells and quarrels which result from their intoxication. The very Parayars refuse to have anything to do with the Chucklers, and do not admit them to any of their feasts".

In the Madurai Manual, 1868, the Chakkiliars are summed up as "dressers of leather, and makers of slippers, harness and other leather articles. They are men of drunken and filthy habits and their morals are very bad. Curiously enough, their women are held to be of the Padmini kind, *i.e.*, of peculiar beauty of face and form, and are also considered to be very virtuous. It is well known, however, that Zamindars and other rich men are very fond of intriguing with them, particularly in the neighbourhood of Paramakudi where they live in great numbers". There is a Tamil proverb that a Chakkilia girl and the ears of the millet are beautiful beyond compare when mature.

The Chakkiliars of Sirumalai possess many of these characteristics, but the observations of Thurston and the other authorities that have been quoted here cannot be applied in toto to them. Their women are quite ordinary specimens with not much of beauty to speak of though occasionally one comes across one or two startling cases who look quite ravishing even in their filthy clothes. But it should be said to their credit that they have a good muscular build and some of them have a fine proportion of body. Though they live in very unhygienic surroundings, they are people with excellent physical stamina and endure any amount of hard work. Generally their women are more good looking than men and their physical outline also is much more well defined. Even the young women in their blooming virginal state, are quite free spoken. There is not much of segregation to be seen among the sexes and men almost always wear a minimum of clothes and generally they are semi-naked. Only when they go out of their village to meet their relatives or to a town in the plains like Dindigul, they wear a shirt and a towel. Though the women always wear a saree, they do not appear to be over-careful in covering the whole of their body.

Pallans

64. Pallans of this village are mostly plantation labourers. They are 34 in number in the village. Their name is said to have been derived from the word *Pallam*, a low-lying land. The legend goes that when the castes were originally found, by whoever it was, these people, they say, were standing in a low place. That is why, it is said, they were given the name of 'Pallan.' They are experts in wet cultivation. There are many number of sub-divisions such as the Aiya (father), the Amma (mother), the Anja (father), the Atha (mother), the Devendra (Indra), the Kadaiyar (last), the Konga, the Manganadu, the Sozhia and the Thondaman. Their common titles are Moopan, Kudumban and Mankadai. Their marriages are administered by the Peria Kudumban or the caste head. The Thali is placed around the bride's neck by the bridegroom and the bridegroom's sister actually ties it. Their dead are usually buried.

Parayans

65. The Parayans form too negligible a minority in this village and represented by only two households.

The name 'Parayan' is derived from the Tamil word *Parai* (a drum) as certain Parayans act as drummers at marriages, funerals, village festivals and on occasions when Government and commercial announcements are proclaimed. Mr. H. A. Stuart questions this derivation remarking, in the Madras Census Report, 1891 that it is only one section of Parayans that act as drummers. Nor is the occupation confined to Parayans only. It seems in the highest degree improbable that a large, and at one time powerful, community should owe its name to an occasional occupation, which one of its divisions shares with other castes. The word 'Parayan' is not found in *Divakaram*, a Tamil Dictionary of the 11th Century A.D., and the word 'Pulayan' was then used to denote this section of the population, as it is still in Malayalam to this day.

Whatever it is, the Parayans of this village work only as plantation labourers. Their marriages are conducted by their own caste astrologer-cum-priest who is known as Valluvan. Their consummation of

marriage is called "*Sobhana Muhurtham*" and is celebrated sometimes after marriage and the date is often fixed by the bride's mother. Their dead, as a rule, are buried, but sometimes they are burnt. They are nominally Saivites and are in fact the worshippers of the devils and they eat almost all kinds of flesh particularly beef and buffalo's. Their deity is known by such names as Yellamma, Kanniamma, Mariamma, and Bagavathiamma.

66. Mr. Stuart mentions that the Valluvans were priests to the Pallava kings before the introduction of Brahmins for the purpose and even for sometimes after it. He quotes an unpublished Vatteluthu inscription, believed to be of the ninth century, in which it is noted that Sri Valluvanm Puvananan—the Uvacchan (or temple ministrants) will employ six men daily, and do the temple service. From this, Thurston makes the inference that the Valluvan was a man of recognised priestly rank and of great influence. The prefix "Sri" is a notable honorific. By itself this inscription would prove little, but the whole legendary history of the greatest of Tamil poets, Thiruvalluvar, "The holy Valluvan", confirms all that can be deduced from it. His date can only be fixed approximately, but it is probable that he flourished not later than the tenth century A D. Thurston proceeds to assert that it would be safe to say that this extraordinary sage could not have attained the fame he did, or have received the honours that were bestowed upon him, had not the Valluvans, and therefore, the Parayans been in the circle of repectable society in his day. Thurston's conjecture and argument look a little strange and far-fetched. It would seem that he tries to generalise from a stray instance. Had Parayans been once a respectable class, it is extremely improbable that they would have fallen so low subsequently. No one comes across anywhere in Tamil literature that the Parayans ever held an estimable position in society. Even in the most ancient works of Tamil literature, they give the impression of having been only a depressed and downcast community looked down upon by the caste Hindus more with indifferent sympathy than with any degree of courtesy. But the observation of Thurston cannot easily be dismissed as hollow in view of the unpublished inscription which we have quoted above and in view of another observation by Mr. F.R. Hemingway in a note on the Parayans of the Tiruchy district which runs as follows: "They have a very exalted account of their lineage, saying that they are descended from the Brahmin priest Sala Sambavan, who was employed in a Siva temple to offer poojas to the God with offerings of beef, but who incurred the anger of the God by one day concealing a portion of the meat to give it to his pregnant wife, and was therefore turned into a Parayan. The God appointed his brother to do duty instead of him, and the Parayans say that Brahmin priests are their cousins. For this reason they wear a sacred thread at their marriages and funerals. At the festival of the Village Goddesses, they repeat an extravagant praise of their caste, which runs as follows. "The Parayans were the first creation, the first who wore the sacred thread, the uppermost in the social scale, the differentiators of castes, the winners of laurels. They have been seated on the white elephant, the Vira Sambavans who beat the Victorious drum. It is a curious fact that, at the feast of the Village Goddess, a Parayan is honoured by being made the poojari (priest) of the temple, by having a turmeric thread tied to his wrists, and being allowed to head the procession. This, the Parayans say, is owing to their exalted origin".

67. We learn it on the authority of Thurston again that some Brahmins consider a forsaken Para-Cheri, (the locality where Parayan live), an auspicious site for an Agraharam. A very peculiar case is that of the Gramam founded for and occupied by the clerks of the earliest Collectors (District Magistrates) of the Jaghir of Karunkuli from 1795 to 1825 A. D. These clerks were Brahmins, and it was called the Agraharam. It was deserted when the head-quarters of the Collector were removed to Kancheepuram. It is now occupied by Parayans (*i.e.*, at the time when Thurston wrote his monumental work 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India'), but is still called the Agraharam. Thurston proceeds to say that it is well-known that a Brahmin considers himself polluted by the touch, presence or shadow of a Paraya, and will not allow him to enter his house, or even the street in which he lives, if it is an Agraharam. But it is not so well known that the Parayans will not allow a Brahmin to enter the Cheri. Should a Brahmin venture into the Paraya quarter, water with which cowdung has been mixed is thrown on his head, and is driven out. It is stated by Captain J.S.F. Meckenzie that Brahmins in Mysore consider that great luck will await them if they can manage to pass through the Holoya quarter of a village unmolested, and that, should a Brahmin attempt to enter their quarters, they turn out in a body and slipper him, in former times, it is said, to death.

The Parayans of Sirumalai have to depend upon the service of some Valluvans living in the plains while celebrating their marriages and other functions since no Valluvan resides in this village.

68. Among the Parayans, the attainment of puberty by girls is a subject of great curiosity to most of the women. This is supposed to be due to the fact that the menstrual fluid is held in horror, and evil consequences are supposed to follow from not merely contact, but even the very sight of it. It is with extreme anxiety the first approach of puberty in a girl is watched. The moment it appears, the girl begins to wear some covering of some description, whatever it is, even if it be a most useless torn cloth or a pathetic rag over her left shoulder and breast. Till this time, a bit of cotton cloth round her waist has been considered sufficient and a great portion of her lower limbs and the entire upper part of the body might remain without any cloth. Now she is kept apart either in the house or in a separate hut. Pollution is supposed to last eight days. On the ninth day, the girl is bathed, and seated in the courtyard. Ten small lamps of flour paste called *Dhristi Mavu Vilakku* to avert the evil eye are put on a sieve and waved before her three times. Then a tray of coloured water (Aarathi) with burning camphor in it is waved before her. Now happens a funny thing. Some younger female relatives stand behind her and strike her waist and buttocks with puttu (flour cake) tied in a cloth. This is believed to make her strong. At the same time, other women strike the ground behind the girl with a rice pestle. Then presents are given to the girl. In some places, they say the girl is beaten within the house by her paternal aunt or some other woman of that relationship. It is just physical beating. The latter repeatedly asks the girl to promise that her daughter shall marry her paternal aunt's son.

These are all customs that date from an undated past and the Parayans of Sirumalai do not seem to stick to all of them. They have a tendency to fall in line with the customs of the communities living around, though, of course, they would zealously preserve the essentials.

Since Parayans form too small a minority in the population of the village, almost a handful, just eight in number, there is no necessity to dilate further on their customs, manners and the like.

Kuravans

69. There are two households of Kuravans in this village. These Kuravans are working as scavengers under the Village Panchayat and one is working as a plantation worker.

Christians

70. The Christians in the village account for a total of 129 persons in the population of the village, distributed among thirty-two households. Most of them are found in Pudur hamlet and some of them are employed as plantation labourers in St. Joseph's Estate. All of them are Roman Catholics. A majority of them are from the Paraya community who are found in Pudur and others are from communities like Udaiyar, Nadar and others. It is related by some of the villagers that these conversions took place about two or three decades ago because of their economic backwardness when some Christian Missionaries who came to own estates in Sirumalai took active interest in converting as many people as possible to Christianity.

It is only too evident that almost all of these Christians are still economically at a low level and do not seem to live a very prosperous life. Most of them are labourers employed in plantations and a few of them work in plantations as labour supervisors. Almost all of them are Christians only in name and their religion seems to stop with going to church on Sundays and observing a few rituals during marriages. Since they are all converts from Hinduism, they still cling to many Hindu customs, for example, fixing up of auspicious date for functions according to the Hindu calendar, and consulting an astrologer before holding their marriages. In several major and minor particulars relating to the ceremonies, Hinduism still seems to survive among them and the caste divisions also have not been obliterated. A Christian Nadar under no circumstances would choose to have marital alliance with a Christian Pillai or a Christian Paraya. The stigma of social inferiority that has always attached to the Paraya community still, in a large measure, subsists. Christianity has not failed to bring its own advantages also. It has slightly altered their position in society. The success may not be complete, but still some modicum of change towards a better life is not altogether absent. Socially also they have risen up a little, if not much, in the eyes of the public since they ought to, because when a man faces society as a Parayan, he is shunned and treated with contempt, open or concealed, but when a Parayan faces the society not as a Parayan, but as a Christian, he comes on a footing of equality with other members of society. Life is always more tolerable when a Paraya becomes a Christian in whatever sense one may take it.

The present owners of the St. Joseph's Estate have built a small church for the use of the Christian

labourers in the estate. A Catholic priest from Dindigul comes once or twice a month and on important festive occasions for church service and giving sermons. The Christian labourers of St. Joseph's Estate have regular morning and evening prayers conducted in the church. The Paraya Christians of Pudur hamlet do not seem to have regular prayers in their church which is only a small, thatched and partly dilapidated hut. They get a priest to this church once in two months or three months and generally do not attend the church in the premises of the St. Joseph's Estate. But they go to the church in the estate during festive occasions. Caste divisions are not very much evident in the church, but still the Parayans do not freely mingle with the caste Hindus even there. The caste disappears in the church only in the sense that there are no separate partitions and enclosures for Parayans and caste Hindus. Apart from marital alliance, the Christians from caste Hindu communities do not enter into any social relationship with the Paraya Christians or attend their ceremonies and functions even as invitees. But this much cannot be denied that the Paraya Christians enjoy a better status and better treatment in society than non - Christian Parayas.

Birth

71. We make a small distinction here between social customs and religious customs. As far as social customs are concerned, a Christian observes still the customs of the community to which he belongs, rather belonged, in the Hindu fold. Thus a Nadar Christian observes all the social customs of the Hindu Nadar. Only with regard to the religious customs and ceremonies, they observe the Christian rites and ceremonies. The girl is invited to her parents' house by her parents in her seventh or ninth month of pregnancy after the husband and his family people are treated to a conventional feast. Unlike among the caste Hindus, pollution is not observed by Christians on the birth of a child.

Baptism

72. The most important ceremony a child is subjected to is baptism that takes place in the church either on the eighth day or some day within forty days. A priest officiates in the ceremony. By baptism, the child is believed to be washed off of its original sin which tainted and still taints mankind because of the thoughtless error committed by our original ancestors. Baptism also happens to be the christening ceremony when the child is given a name. The child is applied with olive oil in all its organs and the God-parents, on behalf of the child, promise to profess Christianity and denounce Satan, and the responsibility of bringing up the child in true Christian faith is borne by the God-parents. During its seventh or eighth year, the child undergoes such religious sacrament as confirmation, holy communion etc.

73. On puberty, a Christian girl is kept aloof for twelve days as in other communities. During that period, she does not go to church. She attends church only after a purificatory bath. The other ceremonies relating to puberty are the same as those that prevail in the respective Hindu community. The dead among Christians are buried as a rule. The dying as per the Canon Law is expected to receive the extremunction ceremony or the absolution of sin. Sacramental rites in this behalf are performed by a Catholic priest. After death, the body is bathed, decorated with flowers and taken to the burial ground in a coffin. If a priest is available, the funeral ceremonies are performed by him. If a priest is not available, the ceremonies are performed by a catechist. He chants the hymns and prays for the repose of the soul. When the coffin is lowered into the pit, he drops the first sod of earth in it. Mass prayers are also offered for the repose of the soul and annually the departed souls are remembered on the '*All Souls Day*' that falls on second November.

Muslims

74. There are forty Muslims in the village, distributed among nine house holds. Eight households belong to a sub-sect of Rowther while the others belong to the Pattani group. In some parts of Madurai district Labbais are called Rowthers. But this is not correct. There is a distinction between Rowthers and Labbais. The title *Labbai* is, as a rule, reserved for priests or men of some religious learning among the Muslims. Ordinary persons who make no pretension either to learning or to an unusual piety are known as Rowthers. From their speech, customs and dress, it would be evident that most of them belong to the same race as the bulk of the Hindus of the district. It is reasonable enough to suppose that most of them were forcibly converted to Islam during the by gone days of Mohammedan domination. Labbais are Sunnies, their main aim being to propagate religion. The word *Labbai* is of recent origin, and formerly they were known as Sonagar or natives of Sonagam (Arabia). According to W. Francis in his Madurai

District Gazetteer, "They are in fact partly the descendants of Arab traders or refugees who married the women of this coast and partly the descendants of the Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam by Tippu Sultan and the previous Muslim invaders."

The Rowthers of Sirumalai are Rowthers simple and proper and not Labbais. The Muslims of Sirumalai speak Tamil and that is their mother tongue. Most of their domestic ceremonies fall in line with those of the Hindus. The Haji or the religious head among them administers their ceremonies. Their marriage is called Nikkah and it is contractual in character and it is entered in a register. Thali is tied to the girl by the bridegroom's sister at the bride's apartment. No marriage dais is constructed and the bride and the bridegroom are not made to sit together in it as among the Hindus. During all important occasions in a Muslim household, verses from Koran are read. Their young boys undergo circumcision ceremony which is generally done when the boy is 6 or 7 years old. Their women generally do not go without covering their heads with their saree in the streets.

Muslims bury their dead and Haji does the '*Janaszeki-Namaaz*' at the mosque where the body is brought before it is taken to the burial ground. But in Sirumalai, Muslims do the Namaaz prayers at the burial ground itself.

The Muslims now living in Sirumalai are recent migrants from the plains and they have come here to eke out their livelihood. Most of the Muslims are engaged as plantation labourers and one or two as labour maistries, (i e., Overseers) in plantations. Two Muslim individuals are working as teachers. Though traditionally Muslims are butchers, here they have taken to it only as a secondary occupation and sell mutton once or twice a week only. A few Muslim households are found in Chakkiliapatti where they live practically with Chakkilians, though they keep at a distance from them. The Muslims living in this village move with the caste Hindus and others with utmost freedom and in terms of extreme cordiality and fellowship. Except a few all Muslims here appear to be always in quite genial spirits possessing extreme adaptability to the society around them. The Muslim women do not seem to maintain too much of exclusiveness and they commingle with the Hindu women quite freely. Many of the Muslims are found to be quite hefty types, capable of tremendous exertion. They seem quite equal to the arduous nature of life that confronts them on all sides.

Scheduled Tribes: Palliyans

75. Apart from these various communities living in the Natham (house site) area, there are as many as 25 households of Palliyans, a Scheduled Tribe living in the Hills of Sirumalai. They are a primitive type and belong to the pre-Dravidian era. They speak a highly corrupt form of Tamil in a peculiar accent of their own. It is believed that these Palliyans are the original inhabitants of the Palani Hills. There is also a theory that the name 'Palliyan' was derived from Palniyan which in Tamil means man from Palani. These people are known locally as Palians and not as Palliyans or Palleyar as indicated in the list of Scheduled Tribes notified by the Government of India. Even now there are many Palliyans living in the Palani Hills. They also live in Varushanan Valley of Madurai district and in Kulithalai taluk of Tiruchy district and on the borders of the Western Ghats in Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli districts. In the Ethnographic Notes published on Scheduled Tribes by this Department, it has already been stated that in the upper Palanis, the Palliyans are found at an altitude of 5,000′ and in the lower Palanis at an altitude of 3,000 - 5000′. In Sirumalai Hills, they live at an altitude ranging from 2,500 - 4,000′. In other places, they live at the foot of the hills. Since they had formerly nomadic tendencies, it is believed that the Palliyans, who originally lived as food-gatherers in higher altitudes, have moved to the foot of the hills in search of employment as agricultural labourers. This downward movement has perhaps been caused when the Palani Hills came to be occupied by Kannuvans and others who started plantation cultivation. No legend regarding the origin of the Palliyans is available and our conjecture from the available data does not also go far. Consequently our observation that the Palani Hills with the original home of the Palliyans is a surmise based on the concentration of Palliyans as revealed by 1961 Census.

Appearance

76. The Palliyans are short in stature and dolichocephalic and the archaic type of nose persists in some individuals. They are generally black or dark brown in complexion. Some have flat nose and thick lips. The old males among them have tufts with the front part of their head shaven while the younger generation

have their hair cropped. They are scanty in their dress and often wear dirty rags or well-used, and sometimes threadbare clothes, a second-hand shirt or a coat or shorts. Women wear coloured sarees and most often they dispense with blouses and if at all they wear blouses, they are loose fitting. This tribe does not have any established mode of dress, but freely wear whatever clothes are available to them that are rejected by others. Very scarcely do they purchase new clothes. Their women's taste for ornaments is satisfied with a few glass bead studs, nose ornaments and ear-studs made of brass and studded with cheap stones. The women have oval faces, and the men have goatee beards. They have very little hair on their chests and on their bodies. A few have curly hair on the head, but it cannot be said that they are frizzly as in the case of Kadars. Their hair is always kept unkempt and dishevelled.

Occupation

77. The Palliyans are capable of hard manual work and in collecting their food, they climb up to any height and walk up to any distance, unmindful of the strain. They live on roots and collection of minor forest produce and honey. Honey gathering is their chief traditional occupation in which they perhaps excel every other people. They have perfected their own technique in honey-gathering which nobody can easily imitate or will bother to imitate. They show great courage and take a lot of risks in gathering honey. They have their own methods of getting at the beehives, whether they are located in a branch of a tall tree or in a deep precipitous rock-crevice. The following extract from the Ethnographic Notes published by this Department will give an idea of how they collect honey: "They climb trees by using a pole with hook at one end. They fix the hook in a branch or node and climb up scaling the pole. If the beehive is in a deep crevice, they use a rope chain, the one end of which is tied to the trunk of a tree on the rock. The rope itself is made by twisting four or five twines of a creeper called Karungodi which can withstand the weight. One of the party descends to the beehive with the help of the rope. Another man standing at the top will lower a burning torch towards the beehive and drives away the bees. The torch is then withdrawn and a bamboo tray in which plantain trees are spread is lowered. It is pushed with a forked stock so that it comes just below the beehive. Then the beehive is pierced with another pointed stick. Pieces of the beehive fall with honey in the tray. The tray is sent up once or twice and the contents emptied. In this manner, the entire beehive is dismantled. Old tradition has it that only the wife's brother should stand guard at the top and see to the safety of the rope-chain. Now-a-days this is not followed because they have confidence in other members of the tribe. The season for honey gathering is from December to April when Kurinji flowers blossom ".

Since their food requirements are few and are easily satisfied, they are inclined to be indolent. The Palliyans do not have any bow or arrow or any fire arms. Going out for hunting and bagging big animals is not their favourite occupation. But they do catch small animals by the following method and make a meal of them. A pit is dug along the path usually taken by the animals and it is covered with twigs and earth. When the animal falls into the pit, they rush towards it from the hiding place and kill it. The animal is shared by the entire settlement.

They also catch wild fowls or rabbits by a method called by them '*Idikki*'. A slab of heavy stone is made to stand inclined over a stick. Grains are strewn underneath the stone. When a fowl or rabbit tries to eat the grain, the stone slab is tripped and it falls heavily on it. It is crushed under the weight of the stone.

Almost all the Palliyans living in Sirumalai Hills are now working as plantation labourers and they have come to possess sufficient skill in plantation work. They live more or less permanently attached to different plantations and honey gathering is only their secondary occupation. Formerly they were living merely on roots and honey and other forest produce. But now they eat food made out of rice and other inferior grains.

Social life

78. As a tribe, they are not very strongly knit and do not possess much cohesiveness. But each settlement has its own headman who is called by the name Muthiri in Sirumalai area, as Nattanmaikkaran or Nattanmai in Shenpagathope and Thandikudi areas and as Kannikkaran in Tirunelvely district. The office usually goes by heredity. But at times a more resourceful and assertive man capable of dominating the tribe and can get on cordially with forest officials and others is appointed. The Muthiri in Sirumalai is assisted by Kambalians whose duty is to summon persons to appear before the Tribal Panchayat. The authority of the Muthiri is always acknowledged and

his judgement in case of disputes is accepted. Whenever there is a dispute between two groups in the settlement, the Muthiri hears the dispute and decides which is the offending party. The offending party will then leave the settlement with their family and live elsewhere either in the forest or in a neighbouring settlement for a fixed number of days. But this has not happened within recent memory in Sirumalai Hills. The Muthiri can also impose small fines. He can keep part of the fine for himself as remuneration. Adultery within the tribe is viewed leniently. Relationship with unmarried young girls is not unusual and is openly carried on and the tribe does not take much notice of it. Adultery with a man outside the tribe usually ends in excommunication. But if the woman returns to the settlement with her children born to outsiders, they are admitted and children absorbed in the community in course of time. In Sirumalai one woman by name Ammaponnu deserted her husband and went to live with a Valluva Pandaram. She lived with him for fifteen years. When the Valluva Pandaram took fancy for some other woman and ran away with her, this woman came back to the Palliyan settlement. At present, she has been accepted with some reservations which are likely to disappear with the passage of time.

Marriage

79. Palliyans do not observe Kulam or Gothram in contracting a marriage because they have none. Nor do they go to distant places to seek a bride. Marriage alliances take place almost always within the settlement itself. Only if this is not possible, they seek alliance in other settlements. But a man coming from other settlement in search of a bride is often looked upon with distrust and suspicion. A Palliyan never goes more than ten miles in seeking his spouse. Since exogamy is not practised, many odd things happen. There are cases where, if previous relationship is traced, one's wife may turn out to be his own paternal cousin of the second or third degree. If exogamy is practised, such marital relationship will not be possible. As has been observed in the Ethnographic Notes on Scheduled Tribes published by this Department, this can lead, in one sense to biological degeneration of the tribe. But this is, to some extent, counteracted by the tendency of the Palliyan women choosing to live with men outside the tribe. Another tendency noticed among the tribe is that boys are married to very young girls and sometimes even to girls that have not attained puberty. Consequently sex life in Palliyan settlement start as soon as the girl attains puberty. No girl is seen to remain single for more than one year after attainment of puberty. Nor is the girl permitted to remain a virgin for more than six months. There is not any rigid surveillance by the elders over the young generation. Nor is there any parental vigil or control over the girls to prevent pre-marital relationship. There are instances in which elopements have taken place at too small an age which are later regularised through marriages. There is less affinity or cohesion between parents and children than in other tribes, or Caste Hindus.

Consanguineous marriages are frequent and cross cousin marriages are widely prevalent. In Sirumalai village, out of twenty six marriages of males, eighteen have married their paternal aunt's daughters, one his maternal uncle's daughter and six their sisters's daughters. Such marriages are not, however, quite stable. Women in this tribe enjoy a great freedom of sex life even after marriage. A girl is not bound to marry the boy to whom she is betrothed by her parents. If she wishes, she can elope with some other boy and live like husband and wife. If she is dissatisfied with her husband, she can leave him and live with some other man. Wife-stealing and husband-stealing seem to be quite common. Sometimes the husband is far junior to the wife in age. Women of 25 years sometimes desert their husbands and live with boys of 16 or 17 years old. But these circumstances are very rare.

Birth customs

80. The pregnant woman does not remain at home nor is she treated with any particular delicacy or care. In the seventh or ninth month, she is taken to her mother's place after being given a good feast in her husband's house by her parents. The first delivery takes place in her mother's place and the others in the husband's place. The delivery always takes place in the pollution shed. An experienced old woman of the community assists the mother during the labour pains for which she is paid Re. 1 and a measure of rice. In difficult cases, Valukkapattai, the bark of a medicinal plant is powdered and given with margosa oil to the woman. Pollution is observed for thirty days after delivery and the mother and child are taken into the house after a sort of purificatory bath. At the time of delivery, a bill-hook and some other articles are placed by the side of the pollution shed to keep away the devils and ghosts. The umbilical cord and the pleasanta are usually put in a pot and buried in a spot near-by. For three days, the mother lives on an

extremely restricted diet and she is given only a sweetened decoction of ginger, pepper and Thippili. This preparation is called '*Kayam Marunthu*'

Puberty

81. The puberty customs of Palliyans are interesting and the following extract from our Ethnographic Notes deals with it briefly and succintly. "As soon as a girl attains puberty, she is taken to the separate shed called Muttu Kudisai. In Sirumalai area, a new shed is constructed specially for this purpose by the prospective bridegroom, if there is any, or by the maternal uncle. The girl has to remain for thirty days in this shed and during this period, no male is permitted to see her. Before entering the hut, the girl has to take along with her a bow called '*Arjunan vill*' made of palmstick. On the thirtieth day the hut is pulled down and the materials thrown into a stream. The girl is seated and seven pots of water are poured on her quickly and continuously so that all pollution may get washed. While this is being done, her brothers-in-law and prospective grooms throw on her balls of cowdung and pods of Erukkan (*Calatropis gigantea*). She is then made to walk over a turmeric-smeared thread of about ten feet length, put on the ground. The ends of the thread will be held in position by asking two prospective suitors to stand over it at either end. As the girl walks across and nears the end of the thread, the groom at that end should run away before the girl could touch him. If she touches him, the boy gets polluted and will have to be administered bath with seven pots of water. He in turn will be pelted with cow-dung balls and pods of Erukkan. By this ceremony, a lot of fun is created. The girl dips herself in seven streams before she is admitted into the house. It is usual for the maternal uncle to present her with new clothes.

Puberty is celebrated in Shenbagathope in a slightly different manner. Pollution is limited to sixteen days. On the sixteenth day, the girl and one of the prospective grooms are seated side by side and water poured over them. When the girl is deposited in the pollution shed, she is not asked to keep with her the bow called *Arjunan Vill*. She is instead asked to take a bundle of Prandai (*Vitis Quadrangularis*) as pillow."

Death customs

82. The Palliyans always bury their dead. They do not have any fixed place as burial grounds. They bury wherever there is a convenient spot. Before the body is carried to the burial ground, the corpse is given a cold water bath and sandal paste applied. The practice among Palliyans is not to revisit the place of burial ground after they come away after burial. But in Sirumalai, the Palliyans revisit the place on the third day and pour milk and ghee near the place. In all places, *Karumathi* (final day obsequies) is performed on the sixteenth day when a small feast is arranged to close relatives. In Sirumalai, a fowl is sacrificed on this day. Once the Karumathi is over, the departed soul is never remembered by any annual or other ceremonies of any sort. Speaking generally, the Palliyans spend very little on death ceremonies.

Residential pattern

83. Being a hilly village, houses in Sirumalai are naturally scattered over different slopes and there is a lot of space in between the houses in an irregular fashion except in Chakkiliapatti where the huts are congested, one almost leaning on the other. Unlike in villages in the plains, there are not many streets in Sirumalai and the houses seem to be a hotch-potch collection facing any direction they like with lanes and by-lanes going on a haphazard manner. In Pazhaiya Ur and Chakkiliapatti hamlets, the ground being more slopy than in Pudur hamlet, the houses are mostly constructed on the slopes and access to houses on the upper levels is made easy by stone pathways. In the hamlets of Pazhaiya Ur and Pudur where a good number of inhabitants are estate owners and small peasant proprietors, the houses are medium sized and are generally tin-roofed with stone walls. No terraced houses are to be found. Even the storeyed houses of the well-to-do planters have only tin-roofs. The reason presumably is that terraced houses cannot stand the lashing rains and the howling winds that are a normal feature of the hills during a great part of the year. The dwellings of the poor are small sized with mud plastered stone walls and thatched tops. Most of them are dark gloomy hovels with no window or any other aperture to admit light or air. They do not have any courtyard or backyard. The coolies in St. Joseph Estate have been provided with living quarters which, though small in dimensions, without much living space are somewhat roomy for a small family of 4–5 members. The houses of Harijans in Chakkiliapatti are tiny ones, located at unhygienic surroundings and the roofs are invariably thatched ones. They form horribly congested cluster, with no streets separating them. The whole hamlet gives a clumsy appearance.

Table No. IV

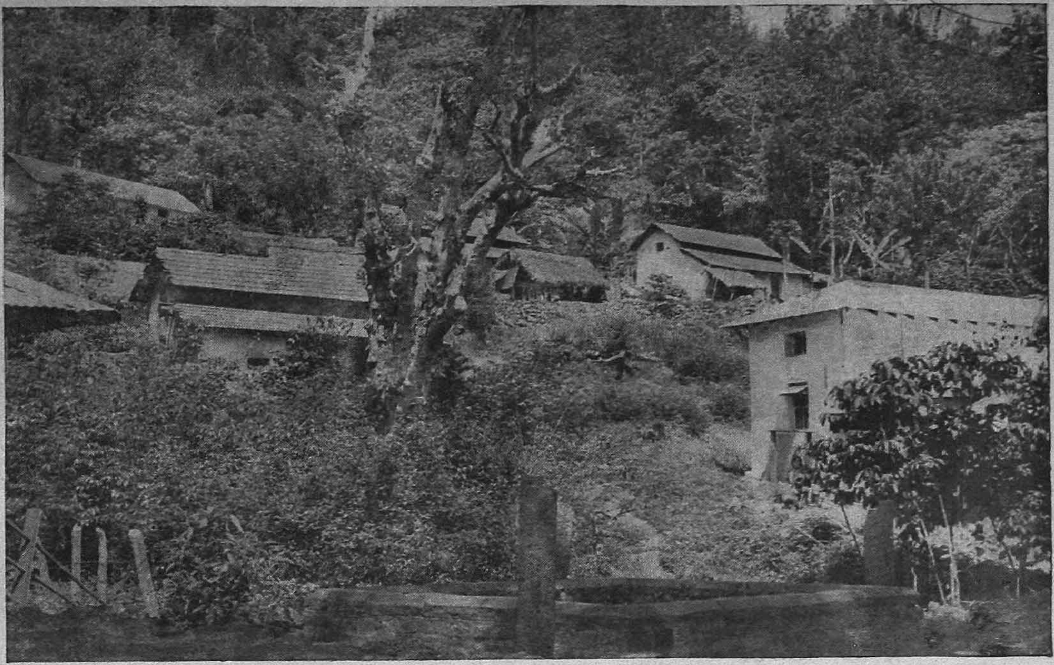
House Types

Caste/Community occupying the houses	No. of houses occupied by each community	No. of houses with the roofs made of							No. of houses which built of					No. of houses with			
		Terraced houses	Country tiles	Mangalore tiles	Asbestos or Zinc sheet	Straw or grass	Coconut or Palmyra leaves	Tin sheets	Mud only	Bricks	Stone	Others (Plantain) Bark	Huts without walls	Mud floor	Cement floor	Wooden floor	Other types of floor (Bricks)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
Vellalar	124	...	7	...	...	...	75	42	108	3	4	9	...	117	...	...	7
Chakkiliar	102	...	...	...	...	...	89	13	91	...	8	3	...	94	...	...	8
Naidu	76	...	21	...	...	...	54	1	40	10	4	22	...	62	...	...	14
Konar	17	...	...	...	...	...	17	...	17	...	...	...	...	17	...	...	...
Valaiyar	13	...	3	...	...	...	10	...	13	...	...	...	...	13	...	...	...
Nadar	11	...	...	...	...	...	8	3	8	...	3	...	...	8	...	...	3
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...	...	6	1	6	...	1	...	...	6	...	...	1
Naicker	6	...	...	...	...	...	5	1	6	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...
Gounder	4	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	2	...	1	...	...	2	...	...	1
Asari	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Parayar	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...

Table No. IV (contd.)

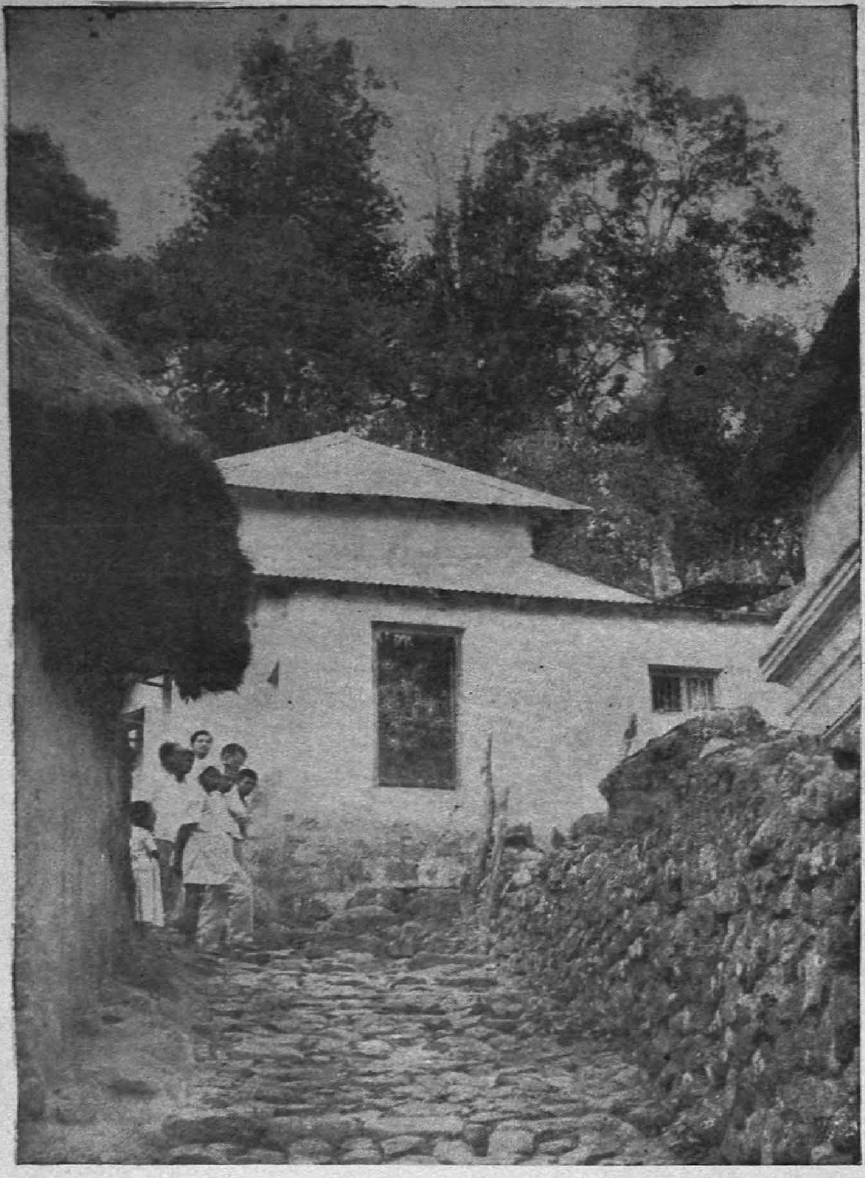
House Types

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
Kuravan	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	..	...	...	2	...	...	..
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Christian	32	...	8	...	...	...	1	23	11	...	21	...	...	11	...	...	21
Muslim (Rowther)	7	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	7	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	...
" (Pattani)	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
Total	418	...	39	...	...	...	293	86	328	13	43	34	...	362	...	...	56

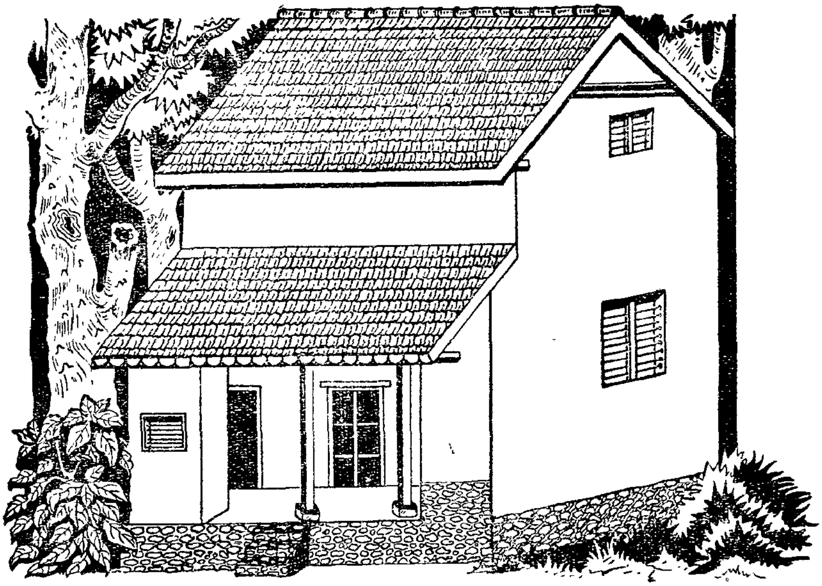


Houses in Sirumalai – See the houses scattered on the slopes of the hill.

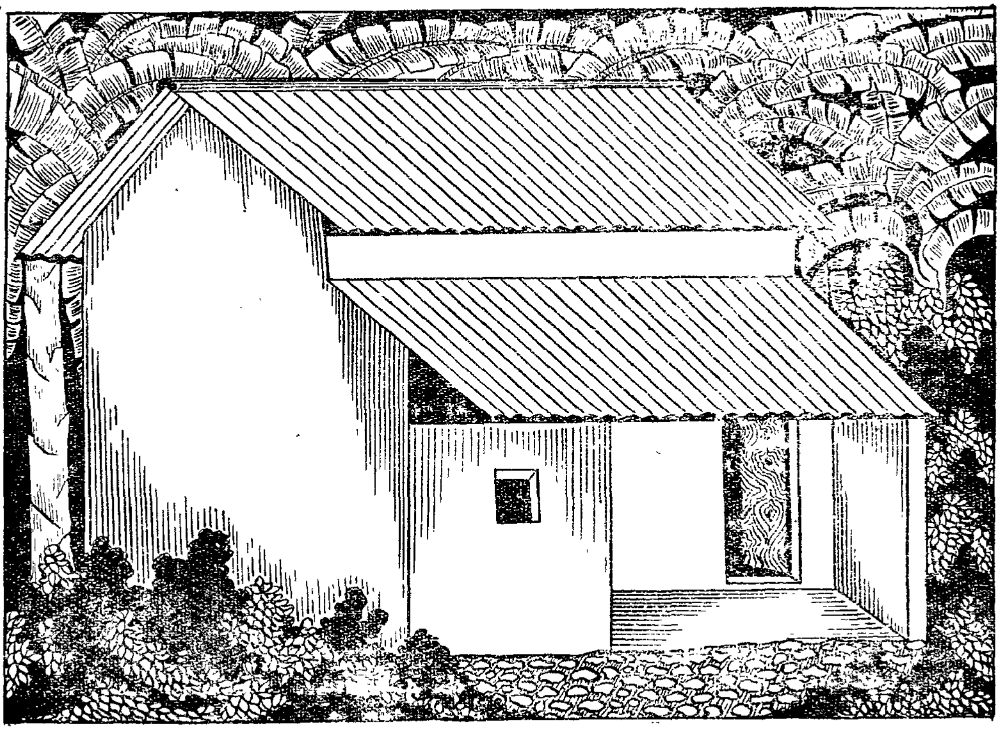
An estate owner's house inside the Estate.



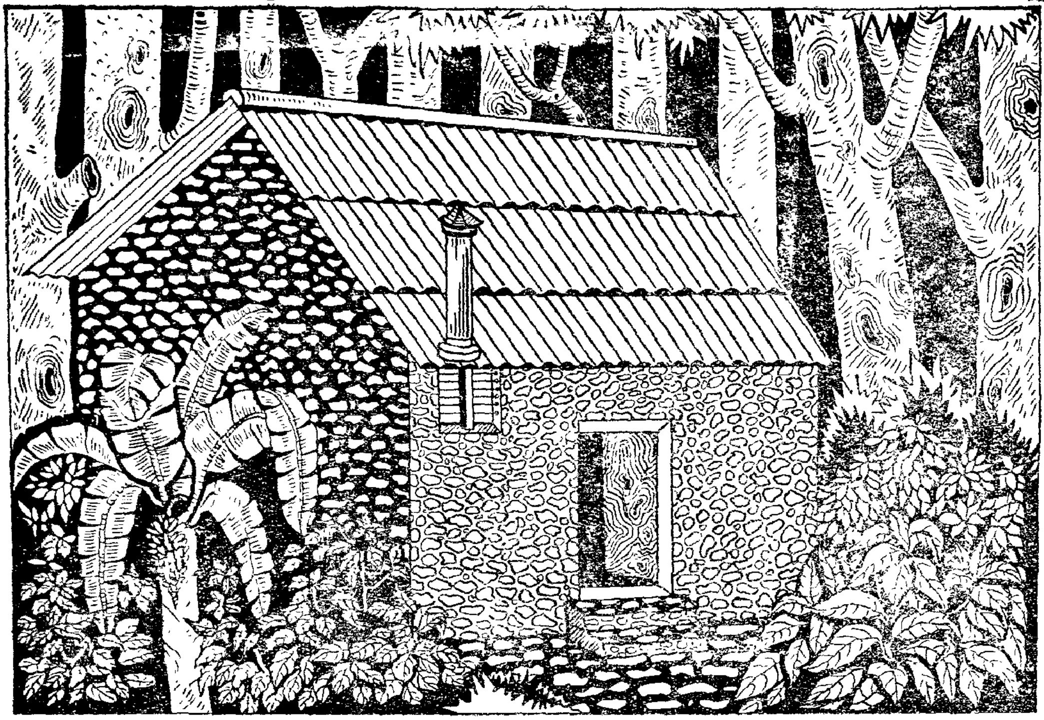
A tin - roofed house of a Vellala cultivator.
See the slope way to the house is stone-paved.



An Estate owner's tiled dwelling at Pazhaiya ur



A corrugated tin roofed dwelling



An Estate coolie worker's dwelling.

A mud-walled and leaf-roofed dwelling of a poor ma

The hut of a Chakkilian

Accommodation

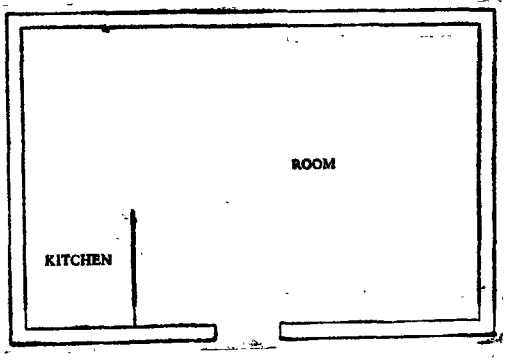
84. The accommodating capacity of the dwellings in the village can be understood from a study of the plinth area and the rooms available in the dwellings. The table below indicates the plinth area of the dwellings correlated with the average size of the household.

Plinth Area.

Plinth area of the house (Sq. ft.)	No. of houses.	Percentage to total.	Average No. of persons per household.
Up to 50 Sq. ft.	5	1·20	1.8
51 - 100	35	8·38	3.2
101 - 200	160	38·27	4.2
201 - 300	77	18·43	5.0
301 - 500	59	14·11	4.9
501 - 1,000	57	13·64	5.2
1,001 - 2,000	19	4·54	6.5
Above 2,000	6	1·43	6.9
	418	100·00	4·59

Rooms

85. Most of the houses which are small huts where the poor folk live are single roomed. As many as 70% of the dwellings in the village are single roomed. They accommodate 71·2% of the total population. The available one room is the dining room, living



Ground plan of a hut

room, sleeping room and the kitchen too. There are some houses which are double roomed. They account for 13·87% of the total dwellings. Nearly 17·50% of the population live in them. Only 32 families live in dwellings with more than three rooms. Among them, twelve families are living in houses containing four or more rooms.

Table No V

Households by number of rooms and by number of persons occupying

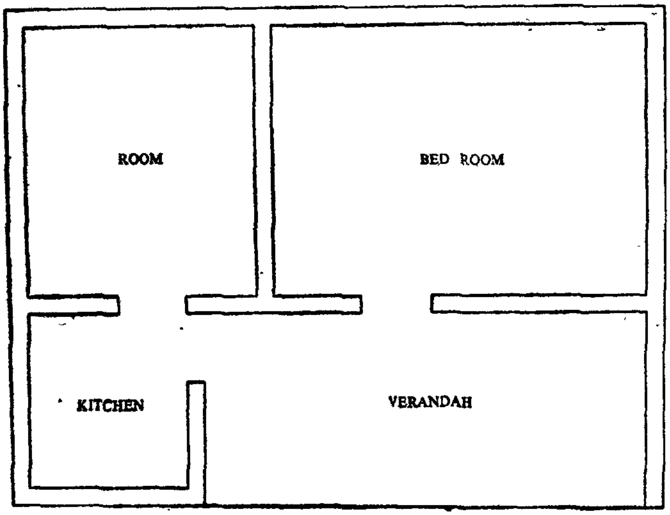
Caste/ Community	Total No. of households	Total No. of rooms	Total No. of family members	Households with no regular room: No. of households	Households with no regular room: Total No. of family members	Households with one room: No. of households	Households with one room: Total No. of family members	Households with two rooms: No. of households	Households with two rooms: Total No. of family members	Households with three rooms: No. of households	Households with three rooms: Total No. of family members	Households with four or more rooms: No. of households	Households with four or more rooms: Total No. of family members
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Vellalar	124	180	603	2	2	81	351	27	140	11	70	3	40
Chakkiliar	102	118	504	1	2	90	445	8	39	...	...	3	18
Naidu	76	134	335	...	...	38	133	27	134	5	30	6	38
Konar	17	19	73	...	...	6	68	...	...	1	5	...	...
Valaiyar	13	14	71	...	...	12	65	1	6	...	...	...	...
Nadar	11	12	35	...	...	10	33	1	2	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	7	31	...	...	7	31	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	6	8	29	...	...	4	15	2	14	...	...	...	...
Gounder	4	4	22	...	...	4	22	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	3	8	...	...	3	8	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. V (contd.)

Households by number of rooms and by number of persons occupying

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Asari	2	2	5	...	.	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parayar	2	4	8	...	...	1	6	...	...	1	2	...	...
Kuravar	2	2	6	...	...	2	6	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	2	3	...	...	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	1	5	...	...	1	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	1	4	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
Maravar	1	1	4	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalai-kallan	1	1	3	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	36	129	...	...	30	120	...	...	2	9	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	8	27	...	...	6	26	1	1	...	...	..	...
Muslim (Pattani)	2	2	13	...	...	2	13	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	418	562	1,920	3	4	315	13,67	68	337	20	116	12	96

Another common feature found in most of the dwellings is the Thinnai (Pial). It is found in front of the house by the side of the threshold. The Thinnai is constructed by raising the floor to 2-3′ above the ground level and plastering it with mud or cement. It is the place for chit - chat of the old people in the house and their resting place too.



Ground plan of a tiled house

Cost of construction

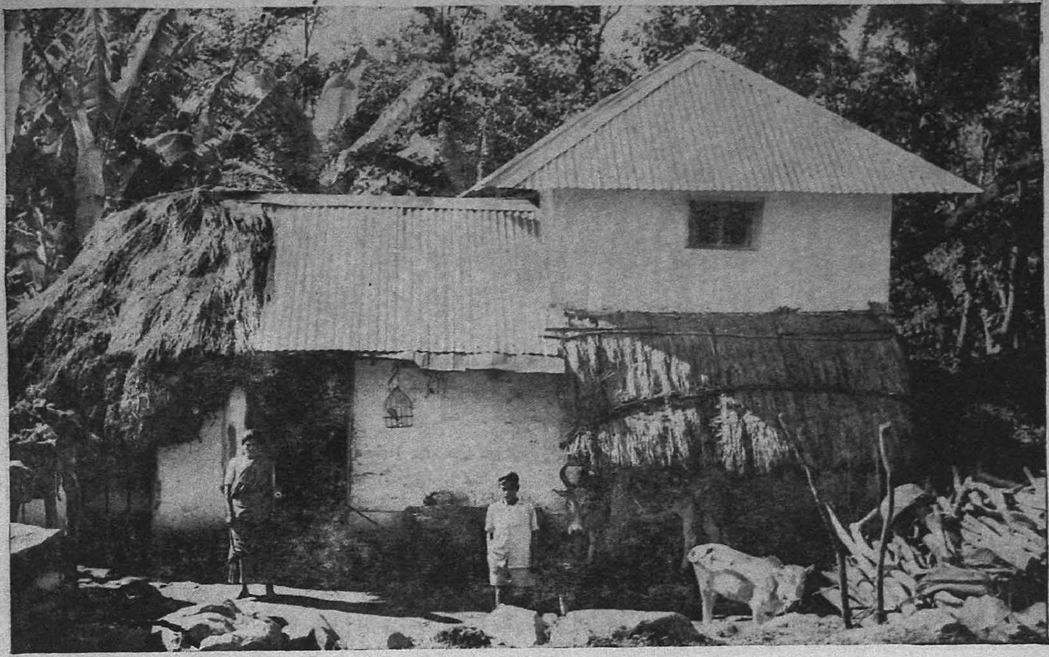
86. Housing materials commonly required such as stone, wood, thatching grass etc., are locally available. Stones are quarried by the Oddans from village itself. The zinc sheets as well as other hardwares are procured from Dindigul. The door and window frames etc., are made of jack wood, vagai wood, or kurolia and occasionally by the well - to - do in rose wood and these trees are obtained in Sirumalai Hills. Poor people thatch their huts with Tharugam and Oori grass which grow in abundance in the lower slopes of the hill. The following figures would give a fair idea to the reader of the probable cost of constuction of a dwelling in the village.

The cost of construction for a normal hut of 20′ x 30′

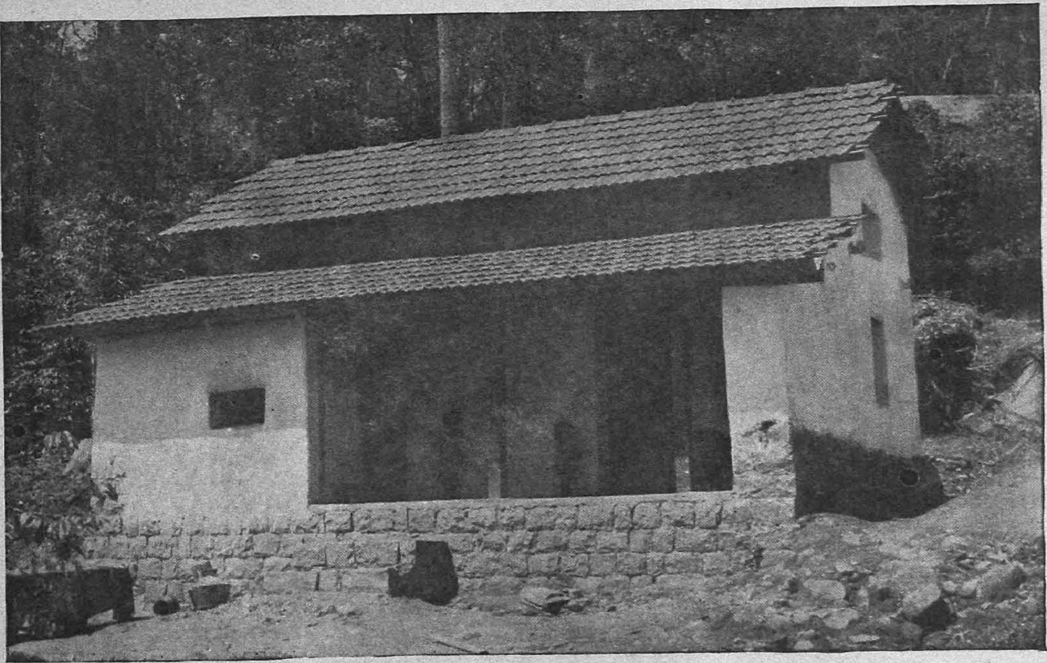
	Rs.
Foundation digging	30
Stones	20
Construction cooly for the wall	200
Rafters	15
Thatching expenses	85
Total ...	350

Stone building	Rs.
Foundation expenses	100
Stones	200
Masonry charges	600
Rafters, planks etc.	520
Carpentry	250
Tin sheet or tiles	350
Cement	250
Total ...	2,270

The first excavation work for laying the foundation of the house is done after worshipping the family deity. When the first door frame is set, the elders of the village are invited and a small pooja is offered to either Lord Vinayaga or to the family deity. They put marks of sandal paste and kumkum at four or five places on the frames. The chief artisans that are in charge of construction like the stone cutter, the carpenters and the mason are given a small conventional monetary present called Dhakshina of Rs. 1·50 along with plantain fruits, Thamboolam, sandal paste etc. During the house - warming ceremony, a Brahmin



A typical planter's dwelling – Tin roof is common in Sirumalai.



A tiled house of a Naidu planter.

A thatched hut of a Chakkilia plantation Cooly. The walls too are made of thatch.

Living quarters for the labourers in Joseph's Coffee Estate.

priest does the Punniavachanam and sprinkles holy water to each and every nook and corner in the house. The women members boil milk in a new or a well cleaned vessel. A coconut is broken, incense is burnt and a small pooja is offered to the deity. And the invitees are given a small share of the milk boiled along with one or two plantain fruits, one or two pieces of coco-nut, kernel and pansupari. In house-warming ceremony among the Naidus, the occupying couple undergo Nalangu ceremony. They worship Lord Vinayaga and sprinkle holy water in all parts of the house.

There are certain time - honoured beliefs in the matter of constructing a house. They are superstitious in character, but they have come to stay. Houses are not constructed facing temples and trijunctions of roads or path. The four corners of the house are known as Agni Moolai, Sani Moolai, Vayu Moolai and Esanya Moolai and kitchen is always constructed only in the Agni Moolai. The rafters should be in odd number. While entering a new house, a lump of cow-dung is kept at the threshold with milk poured in it. A cow is led to the house and it is made to tread upon the cow-dung and eat the raw rice kept for it. If it urinates inside the house, it is considered a good omen.

Dress

87. Normally men wear white dhoties two yards in length and well-to-do men with some respectable status in society wear dhoties four yards in length. As a rule, people belonging to the labour class wear always a single dhoti of two yards' length while a good number of Pillais and Naidus wear long dhoties of four yards length. Almost all middle - aged and old men put on a towel on their shoulder which they tie round their head as a sort of headwear while working. Young boys wear half pants and shirts and the poor boys wear clothes of cheap coarse variety, often bought ready-made from the street vendors that visit the village once in a month or two. They are usually ill - made and do not properly fit, but that does not matter. People that belong to the economically lowest strata of society wear just a dhoti and a towel and no shirt except when they go out of the village to meet some friends and relatives or to attend a function. Many children of the poor people wear mere loin cloth. Clean and fashionable clothes are a rare sight here. But there are a few young men and women who have taken to the modern mode of dress as in the urban parts. Slack shirts seem to be gradually coming into use. The young girls below ten or twelve years wear skirt and a jacket. The skirt is usually called Pavadai which goes round the waist and descends below the knee. Girls who are over this age, but have not attained puberty wear in addition, a half saree popularly known as Thavani which goes over the skirt and the blouse. Girls that have attaind puberty always make it a point to wear a full saree and a blouse. With old fashioned women, the arm of the blouse goes up to the elbow while the young women belonging to the new generation wear blouses of present day style. Young women that have attained puberty, though they wear a full saree, wear a skirt also underneath the saree as an inner garment which most of the elderly women do not wear. Wearing of modern tight fitting inner bodice or brassiers is not found even among young girls of this village. The women usually wear handloom sarees or silk sarees of various colours and patterns, normally six to nine yards in length. The working class families usually prefer sarees of dark colour, presumably because it hides dirt for long. The Scheduled Caste women wear their sarees upto the knee. The Kallar and Valaiyan women are said to avoid dark blue sarees for fear of offending Karuppan who is of that colour and to whom it is auspicious. Widow belonging to the high castes in the village wear always white sarees as elsewhere. But even among them, poor people do not strictly follow this traditional practice. Wearing of Thilagam or the vermilion mark. called '*Pottu*' is the common practice among married women which is prohibited to widows. The young women who wear sarees of six yards and a skirt inside. One end of the saree is first tucked inside the skirt. The other end is passed round the waist and brought up in front of the breast thrown over the left shoulder leaving half a yard behind as pallav. Pleats are then made and tucked inside in front.

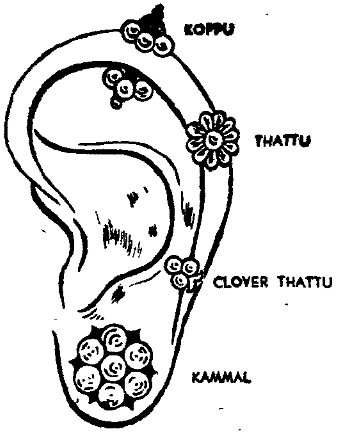
Ornaments

88. Love of ornaments is something born with women, and Sirumalai women are no exception to it. It is also a form of saving money. Even very poor women have a passion for some ornaments and they do not mind making any sacrifice to get some gold ornaments to wear. A woman without some gold ornament on her body, whatever the value, goes down in the social scale. The common ear ornaments found among them are Thandatti, Meladu, Nagavadam, Koppu, Onnappu Thattu, Mattal and Thodu. Thandatti is a heavy gold ornament worn on the lobe of the ears, usually by middle - aged and old women. The neck ornament consists of Pathakkam or pendants, neck chains of various designs like Kasimalai (chain of

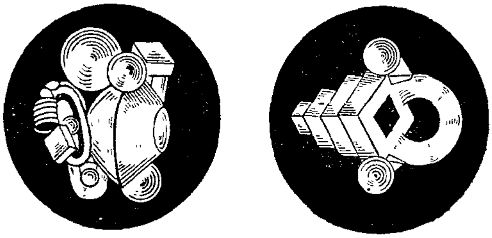
sovereigns), bead chain etc., But these are ornaments worn only by women of well-to-do families. They also wear gold bangles. Ornaments worn in the anklets and in the feet are kolusu, thandai, peeli and minchi. The latter of these are toe-rings. The foot ornaments are usually made of silver.

The designs of Thali vary among different communities in the village. The patterns of Thali and other ornaments worn by different communities are shown below.

Ornaments

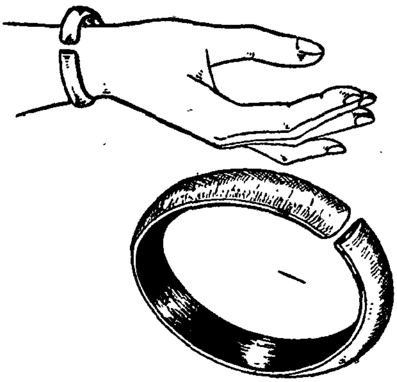


Ear ornaments



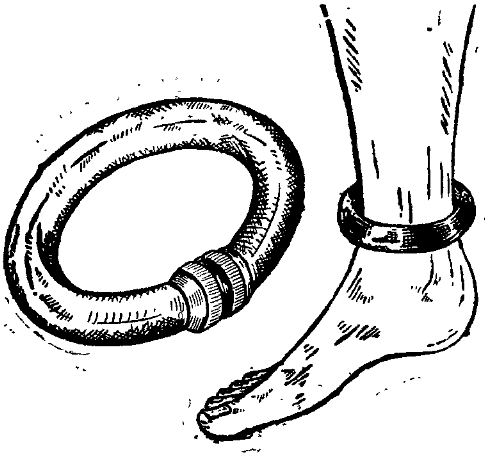
Antiquated ear ornaments of old women

Another type of Thali worn by caste Hindus



Kappu: A thick silver bracelet common among middle aged women

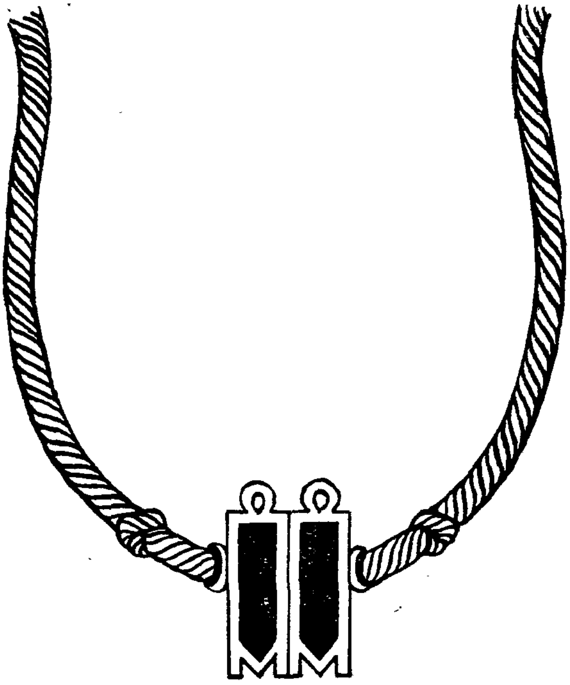
Ornaments (contd.)



Velli Kappu : A silver anklet

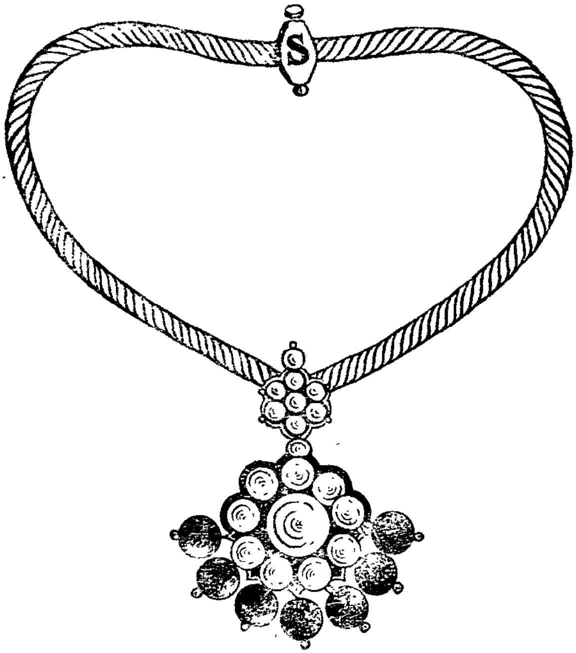
Thali of Chakkilian women

Karugumani worn by Chakkilian women



Thali worn by caste Hindus

Ornaments (contd.)



Pathakkam : A necklet-worn by rich women

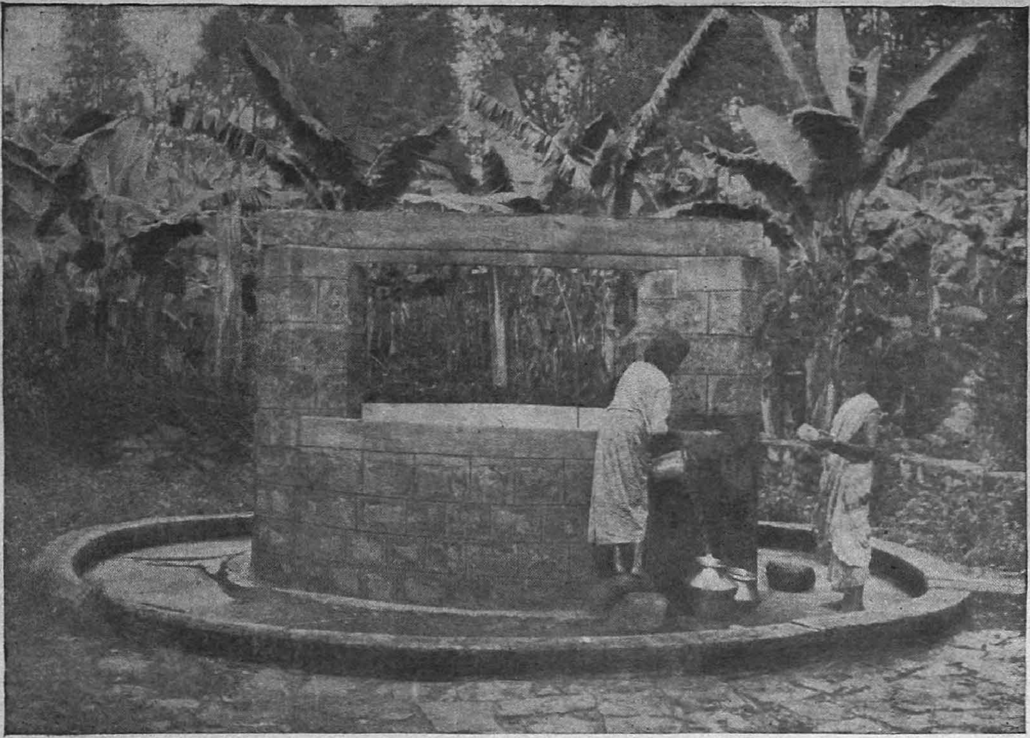
Pottumani : A necklet of black beads worn mostly by Chakkilian women

Hair style

89. There is nothing novel about the hair style of the people to report. Young girls plait their hair by parting it into two. Middle aged and old women generally tie their tresses into a chignon and if the locks are not sufficient and long enough, they use artificial hair-stock. The Telugu speaking people in the village do their chignon in a different way from the rest of the women folk and push the hair knot to a side at the rear, while the other communities leave it at the centre above the back of the neck. Men generally crop their hair except some Scheduled Caste people like Parayans, Chakkilians and the Scheduled Tribe Palliyans, who grow long hair. Uumarried young women and married women who are not very old decorate their chignon or plaits with flowers, particularly during important occasions and festivals. It is not permissible for widows to put on flowers.

Furniture

90. The possession of furniture is limited only to the well-to-do section of the population in the village and the poor households rarely possess any of them except a rope cot of the country type and occasionally a rickety stool. Our study into this aspect shows that on an average, 10–20% of the population possess various items of furniture. A majority of them are found among Pillais and Naidus who are, as a community, well-to-do. Among Scheduled Castes, a few Chakkilians, say 5% possess some ordinary cheap items of furniture like cots, small tools and the like. Among all items of furniture, cot is the most common in most houses. As many as 163 households, i.e., 39% possess cots which are made of cheap wood knit with rope or fibrous square of the palmyrah. Benches, chairs and stools are possessed by 13-21% of the population while costly furnitures like tables and almirahs are possessed by 9-12% of the people only. Among household articles, lantern is the common item possessed by almost all the households. 13 households possess petromax lights while 84 households have torch lights. There are fourteen households distributed among Pillais, Naidus and Chakkilians who possess radios and gramaphones. Being a hilly village, some of the villagers are in possession of guns also and



The village well in the main hamlet.

A Pond in Pudur – A source of drinking water too.

twenty one households are reported to be having guns during our survey. But some of them, it is said, are not licence - holders and use only muskets prepared locally by the country-smiths and artisans.

Ornamental wick lamp

Diet

91. Rice is the staple diet of the people and the poor class use, apart from rice, occasionally the inferior grains, cholam, ragi and cumbu which are locally grown. The normal meal of the well - to - do class commonly consists of rice, dhal, sambar made of vegetables, one or two vegetable side dishes, rasam, butter-milk and appalams. Twice or thrice a week they add mutton also to their diet when mutton dishes, and mutton sauce replace sambar and dhal. But even dhal and sambar are not invariably daily items. Vegetable kootu, and vegetable sauce are prepared on some of the days during the week. During feasts and on festival days, the normal meal is supplemented by vadai and payasam and some other vegetable and mutton dishes. The well-to-do people take for their breakfast iddlies or dosais, paniyarams or uppuma etc.. followed by a tumbler of coffee. Their diet consists of tiffin and coffee in the morning and a square meal in the noon and another square meal in the night. The breakfast of the lower classes usually consists of cold rice left over during the previous night and kept immersed in water. They take a meal at noon and one at night and the meal is usually of poor dietetic quality. Sirumalai being a coffee growing area, many households take black coffee in the morning and sometimes in the afternoon. The diet and food habits of the various communities in the village are shown in Table No. VI below.

Except one Brahmin household, there is no vegetarian household in the village. All people eat meat and the flesh of other animals like deer, rabbit and birds like wild fowl, pigeon etc. Many Hindus living in the plains abstain from meat on Friday, but in Sirumalai, Friday is particularly a meat eating day for most people since meat is available only on that day. If they want to have a non - vegetarian diet on any other day, they kill fowls or go into the jungles to shoot a pigeon or a rabbit or wild goats etc. The Christian labourers working in the Estates eat meat on Sundays which is supplied to them by the estate management and debited to their account. Except Chakkilians and Parayans, scarcely anybody eats beef and pork. The prohibited items of food among the villagers is shown in Table No. VII below.

The edibles are generally prepared in ground-nut oil and gingelly-oil and coconut-oil are rarely used. The common vegetables used are brinjals, chou-chou, snakegourd, beans, green jack fruit and cabbages etc. They fry them and make curry out of them or prepare sauce or kootu.

Health and Sanitation

92. Sirumalai has a fairly agreeable climate, much conducive to good health. Sirumalai can be a good health resort, but the fact that it is a malarial place would come in the way. There was once a proposal to start a Sanatorium here, but the idea was soon given up, or died a natural death because of this fact.

Table No. VI

Diet and food habits of communities

Caste/ Community	Total No. of house-holds	No. of vegetarian house-holds	No. of non-vegetarian households	Households taking				Frequency of meals		
				Rice	Wheat	Grains other than rice or wheat	Roots including tapioca	One meal a day	Two meals a day	Three meals & more a day
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Vellalar	124	...	124	124	...	98	...	...	104	20
Chakkiliar	102	...	102	102	...	75	...	...	92	10
Naidu	76	...	76	76	...	59	...	...	66	10
Konar	17	...	17	17	...	4	...	...	3	14
Valaiyar	13	...	13	13	...	8	...	...	11	2
Nadar	11	...	11	11	...	1	...	...	1	10
Pallan	7	...	7	7	...	1	...	...	2	5
Naicker	6	...	6	6	...	4	...	...	6	...
Gounder	4	...	4	4	...	2	...	...	2	2
Chettiar	3	...	3	3	...	1	...	...	...	3
Asari	2	...	2	2	...	2	...	...	2	...
Parayar	2	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	1	1

Table No. VI (contd.)

Diet and food habits of communities

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Kuravar	2	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	1	1
Pandaram	2	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	1	1
Agamudaiyar	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
Brahmin	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
Oddar	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
Pandithar	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Maravar	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Piramalai-kallan	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
Christian	32	...	32	32	...	10	...	...	10	22
Muslim (Rowther)	7	...	7	7	...	3	...	...	3	4
Muslim (Pattani)	2	...	2	2	...	1	...	...	2	...
Total	418	1	417	418	...	276	...	...	312	106

It is said that a good number of people in all the three hamlets, especially Pudur have enlarged spleens due to malaria. It is true that till recently Malaria was the scourge of this hill, but the village is gradually being freed from malaria, thanks to the extensive and intensive measures taken by the Public Health Department under its '*National Malaria Eradication Programme*', with its headquarters at Batlagundu. This scheme came into operation in 1954 and due to this, the village and its surroundings are almost free from Malaria from 1958 onwards. This can be understood from the decrease in spleen rate and parasite rate in the village, as can be seen from the published reports.

Spleen rate

Hamlet	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Chakkiliapatti	14.2	6.4	31	...	...	...	...
Pazhaiyaur and Pudur hamlets	68.4	48	29	18.9	5.8	...	...

Parasite rate

Hamlet	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Chakkiliapatti	36	5.1	3.8	0.7	...	...	...
Pazhaiyaur and Pudur	55.2	50	29	3.15	0.7	...	...

Now a surveillance worker is stationed in Sirumalai and according to him, none of the sample blood-smears collected by him is '*positive*' for Malaria parasite (plasmodium). Apart from this, no other epidemic or endemic disease seems to prevail here and the general health conditions have been pronounced to be fairly alright. There is no hospital or dispensary here and to take medical advice and medical treatment, the people have to go to Dindigul town. No qualified doctor practises here nor is his absence keenly felt. The people rely very much on native medicines and the popular herbal plants and roots, so freely available around them. Many old men and women, though they are not strictly native doctors, are very much conversant with the methods of preparing home medicines for various maladies, ailments and diseases. The knowledge of popular country medicines is handed down from generation to generation and quite a number of these medicines undoubtedly give some immediate relief though they may not cure the disease altogether. There is one young homeopathic doctor practising here, trying to make an impression all around with a big name board and one or two almirahs full of medicines, but he is not attracting enough patients but this is only his part - time job since he also happens to be the local Branch Post Master. The village is covered by Community Development Progamme and the nearest Primary Health Centre is at Thadicombu which caters to the medical needs of the people of Sirumalai and a doctor comes to this village on certain specified dates on a professional visit. But the location of a small dispensary and the stationing of a small medical staffl in the village appear to be necessary.

Table No. VII

Prohibited foods and drinks

Caste/ Community	No. of households reporting as prohibited				No. that did not report any food to be prohibited	No. that did not report any drink to be prohibited
	Beef	Pork	Meat	Any drink		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Vellalar	124	124	...	124	...	..
Chakkiliar	102	102	...	102	...	...
Naidu	76	76	...	76	...	--
Konar	17	17	...	17	...	...
Valaiyar	13	13	...	13	...	...
Nadar	11	11	...	11	...	...
Pallan	7	7	...	7	...	...

Table No. VII (contd.)

Prohibited foods and drinks

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Naicker	6	6	..	6	...	...
Gounder	4	4	...	4	...	...
Chettiar	3	3	...	3	...	...
Asari	2	2	...	2	...	...
Parayar	2	2	...	2	...	...
Kuravar	2	2	...	2	...	...
Pandaram	2	2	...	2	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	1	...	1	...	...
Brahmin	1	1	1	1	...	...
Oddar	1	1	...	1	...	...
Pandithar	1	1	...	1	...	...
Maravar	1	1	1	1	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	1	...	1	...	...
Christian	32	32	...	32	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	7	...	7	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	2	2	...	2	...	...
Total	418	418	1	418		

93. There is a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre in the village since 1961 with a maternity assistant and an ayah. The centre takes care of the expectant mother, assists her delivery and gives medical advice to the mother during certain months during the post-natal period. It distributes to the mothers and children vitamin tablets supplied by the Panchayat Union. It also supplies daily 450 kgm. of milk powder for the consumption of small children. For the time being, the centre is located in a private house and steps are being taken to construct a new building to accommodate this centre. One gathers the impression that the centre is doing quite an efficient service to the village public and the people also seem to utilise the centre well. The progress achieved by the centre in its various activities since 1961 is shown in the table below.

	1961	1962	1963	1964
1. Mothers attended	63	74	72	64
2. Delivery attended	6	8	27	11
3. Still birth	...	...	2	1
4. Cases sent to hospital on advice	...	11	1	1

Some of the maternity cases go to hospitals in Dindigul for delivery. But this is only in the case of some well-to-do people. Sometimes the maternity assistant herself advises the people in difficult cases to go to Dindigul. The centre also carries on propaganda in Family Planning and so far ten individuals have been supplied with birth control tablets. There is no person in the village that has undergone vasectomy operation.

Table No. VIII

Medical Care

Caste/ Community	Total No. of house-holds	No. of maternity cases				Ordinary medical treatment								Medical con-sultation	Vaccination
		Confined in hospital	Confined by qualified Mid-wife at home	Confined by un-qualified Thai at home	Confined with the assistance of the elders	Allopathic	Allopathic & others (native)	Homeopathic	Homeopathic & others (native)	Homeopathic & Allopathic	Homeopathic, Allopathic others (native)	Others (native)	Not stated		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Vellalar	124	14	23	...	...	...	15	45	17	8	17	20	2	...	...
Chakkiliar	102	4	8	...	...	3	11	36	12	3	1	34	2	...	...
Naidu	76	10	21	...	1	4	4	28	6	7	17	9	1	...	...
Konar	17	1	2	...	...	2	10	...	4	1	...	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	13	2	4	...	...	1	1	8	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	11	1	...	...	...	1	7	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...	2	3	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Naicker	6	...	1	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gounder	4	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. VIII (contd.)

Medical Care

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	2	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Parayar	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalai-kallan	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	...	1	...	...	6	4	6	14	1	...	1	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	1	...	...	...	1	3	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	418	33	64	...	1	23	63	137	65	21	38	65	6	...	...

94. The village has no drainage facilities and other sanitary provisions. A few existing open drainages, constructed by the private house owners for their purpose serve only a small portion of the village, and often the sullage water finds its way into the street and forms a dirty pool. In Chakkiliapatti where Chakkilians dwell, the drainage water stagnates around their dwellings and in the pits of putrid water commonly found here in the front and back of the houses, one often sees pigs rolling and dabbling. The absence of latrine is not keenly felt by the villagers. In some houses of well-to-do people, dry latrines are found in the backyard. The jungle parts and the coffee and banana plantations provide ample space for answering the calls of nature. There is no separate bath room in any of the houses and a portion, either the front or back of a courtyard or some place in the backyard hidden from public view is used for bathing purpose, sometimes with a temporary screen made of silver oak leaves. Most of the people take hot water bath, not in the morning, but after they return from plantations in the evening, using soap or soapnut powder. It is a little strange and amusing that in this small village there is a laundry having a tolerable amount of custom and some of the people get their clothes washed and ironed here. The material habits of the village are indicated in Table No. IX.

People get drinking water from the wells located one at each hamlet. The people never feel any scarcity of water, but the problem of carrying it sometimes over a steep ascent to reach their homes is a big strain and literally an uphill task. And young Jacks rather than Jills are normally sent by mothers for this '*uphill*' business.

Table No. IX

Furniture and consumer goods acquired in last five years

Caste/ Community	No. of households which have acquired furniture in last 5 years							No. of households which have acquired consumer goods in last 5 years					
	Table	Bench	Chair	Easy chair	Stool	Almirah	Cot	Lantern	Petromax	Battery lights	Radio	Gramaphone	Gun
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Vellalar	24	39	34	11	33	32	75	114	7	34	6	1	9
Chakkiliar	6	5	5	1	7	...	5	99	1	6	...	2	2
Naidu	9	33	23	8	19	15	52	74	5	29	4	...	9
Konar	...	1	...	...	...	1	2	17	...	2	...	...	...
Valaiyar	...	2	1	...	1	1	9	12	...	2	...	...	...
Nadar	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	11	...	2	...	...	...
Pallan	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	8	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	...	1	1	...	1	...	5	6	...	1	...	...	1
Gounder	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. IX (contd.)

Furniture and consumer goods acquired in last five years

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Chettiar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...
Parayar	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	...	1	...	...	...
Kuravar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Brahmin	...	..	1	...	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Christian (Roman)	2	4	4	2	2	...	5	32	...	4	1	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	...	1	2	...	2	...	2	7	...	1	...	...	...
„ (Pattani)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Total	41	88	73	22	67	50	163	403	13	34	11	3	21

CHAPTER III

POPULATION

95. Sirumalai has a total population of 1,920 persons comprising 991 males and 929 females. Besides these, there are the Palliyans, a Scheduled Tribe numbering about 80 (44 males and 36 females) about whom we have already dealt with at some length.

Area density

96. Sirumalai is a fairly medium sized village with an area of 4·03 sq. miles. Its density figures often vary and it is 471 persons as per our Socio Economic Survey conducted during December 1960 as against 325 in 1951. In 1911, the population was 1,090 persons and it has increased to 1,920 in December 1960. According to 1961 Census count, the population is 2,446 persons. It is also noticed that the population registers growth and decline at various intervals.

Census years	Total persons
1911	1,090
1921	Not available
1931	1 487
1941	1,659
1951	1.328
1960 (Survey)	1,920
1961 (Census)	2,446

Since 1911, the population shows a tendency to increase except in 1951 Census during which period the figure looks a little too low. However, during the Census Survey conducted in 1960 and the Census conducted during 1961 and subsequently the figures registered show a positive trend. It is seen that the population figures are not very stable, but it cannot be denied that it is growing. During the six decades it has almost doubled up. As compared to the 1951 Census, the rate of growth works out to 44·6% for the decade as per our survey and to 84.2% as per 1961 Census figures. Among the possible factors contributing to such a bloated increase are the scope of employment opportunities in the coffee and plantain estates and the consequent influx of labour force from the neighbouring taluks like Palani, Nilakottai and the drought affected areas of Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli districts. It is difficult, therefore, to assess the rate of natural growth apart from the growth due to migrancy.

Natural Increase

97. The birth and death statistics recorded during the last decade is shown below :

Years	Births	Deaths	Natural increase (Excess of birth over death)
1950	17	21	— 4
1951	20	13	+ 7
1952	22	18	+ 4
1953	18	17	+ 1
1954	35	19	+ 16
1955	47	30	+ 17
1956	34	21	+ 13
1957	38	32	+ 6
1958	40	27	+ 13
1959	44	19	+ 25
1960	6	31	+ 30
Total	376	248	+128

The natural increase for the last decade works out to 128 persons, i.e , 9.6% but the actual increase is 44.6% as per our survey and 84.2% as per the Census count. It must, however, be admitted that registration of vital events is far from complete and no reliance can be placed on this data. Being illiterate, most of the people do not care to register the birth, nor does it attract the notice of the concerned authorities as death does. Death attracts greater notice than birth and therefore, the former easily finds a place in the register than the latter. Moreover, most of the hospital births are not recorded in the village register.

Migration : A major cause

98. With all these exceptions, the wide gap between the natural increase and the actual increase cannot be bridged but for the factors other than natural. We have no accurate data of migrants into the village. An attempt can, however, be made from the details collected during the present Socio Economic Survey. The number of households migrated to this hill during the last decade is 94 which comes to 22% of the total number of households in the village. It is said that the stream of migration runs continuously in recent years. As such, the influence of migrants of this village on vital rates must be definitely marked a mere guide and so, more detailed information will be required on the inflow of migrants, outgoing families, the duration of stay, floating population etc., for the accurate assessment of birth and growth rates. The movement from the village and to the village is too complex to admit an exact measurement with the data available. Further, there is a good deal of floating population, mainly plantation coolies coming from the adjoining low country. Rarely they will be staying in Sirumalai for more than a few months at a stretch. Such population is, however, not accounted for in the present enquiry since it was an off-season while the study was carried out.

Size of Household

99. The village population is distributed among 418 households and the table below gives the particulars regarding the size of the households in the village.

Table No. X

Size of Household

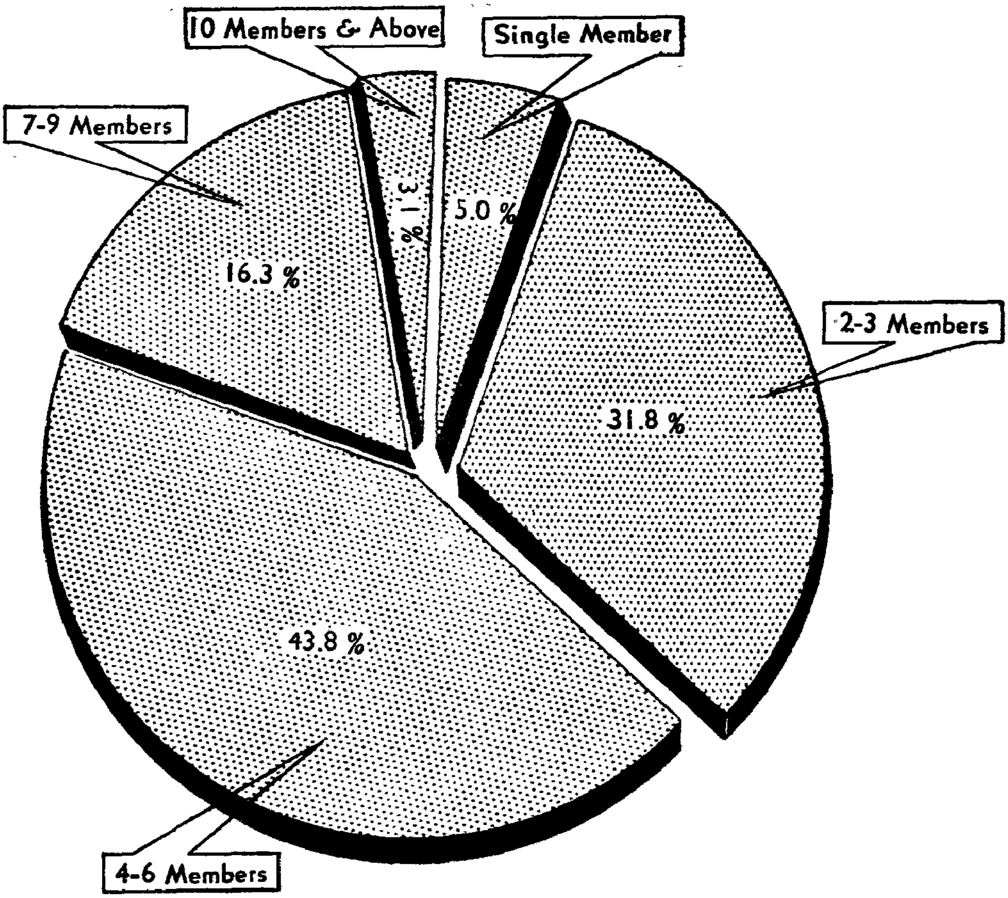
Caste/ Community	Total No. of households	Size of household: Single member			2-3 members			4-6 members			7-9 members			10 members & over		
		Households	M.	F.	Households	M.	F.	Households	M.	F.	Households	M.	F.	Households	M.	F.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Vellalar	124	5	3	2	41	51	53	47	111	114	23	92	85	8	48	44
Chakkiliar	102	...	...	...	27	34	35	56	134	141	16	70	59	3	15	16
Naidu	76	8	7	1	25	28	35	26	70	59	16	67	58	1	6	4
Konar	17	...	...	...	9	11	10	6	16	15	1	4	5	1	7	5
Valaiyar	13	...	...	...	2	2	3	7	19	19	4	17	11	...	...	...
Nadar	11	1	1	...	5	6	5	5	12	11	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	...	...	...	2	3	3	4	9	9	1	3	4	...	...	...

Table No X (contd.)

Size of Household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Naicker	6	...	...	...	2	2	3	2	8	2	2	6	8	...	...	...
Gounder	4	...	...	..	1	...	2	1	3	3	2	6	8	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	2	2	2	1	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	2	...	...	...	2	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...
Parayar	2	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	..
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	1	1	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	.	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...	...	...	1	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	2	1	1	9	11	11	20	53	45	1	4	3	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	2	2	...	2	4	2	2	7	5	1	4	3	...	...	...
" (Pattani)	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	2	1	5	3	...	...	...
Total	418	21	17	4	133	160	172	183	460	437	68	278	247	13	76	69

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS



The average size of the household works out to 4-6 members and the mode value, viz. the size in which the maximum number of household occurs is (4–6) members which constitute 43.7% of the total households. There are twentyone single member households of 17 males and 4 females. Most of these single member households are represented by widowed persons and other employees in the schools and public institutions in the village, who have come down to the village from other places, leaving their family members in their native place or place of settlement. There are 82 larger households (forming 19%) having more than 7 members of which 13 have 10 members and above which may perhaps be due to the joint family system, still in vogue in certain communities like Vellalas, Chakkiliars and Naidus in the village. Among Palliyans, the size of households is as follows.

Size of households	Households	Males	Females
Single member	4	3	1
2 to 3 members	8	10	8
4 to 6 „	12	28	22
7 to 9 „	1	3	5
10 members & over	...	...	...
	25	44	36

Family

100. Family is a social group characterised by common responsibility, economic co-operation, and reproduction, and four distinct types of family organisations emerge from our survey of 418 households. They are simple, intermediate, joint and other family types. The first and most basic is the single family, a nuclear structure, consisting typically, of a married man and a woman with their offspring. The intermediate family consists of larger aggregates. It consists of a married couple with their unmarried or widowed or divorced relatives. The joint family is still larger, with a plural married couple with their kith and kin. The simple family is the universal human social grouping from which shoot off the other familial groups. Our findings in this aspect are given in the table below.

Of all familial groups, the simple type is prominent, constituting 54·3 per cent of the total households. The intermediate families account for 17·9 per cent, joint families eleven per cent and other types of families account for the remaining. The joint family system which is a characteristic feature of the ancient Indian rural families is now giving way to simple and other types of familial groups as the trend nowadays is for the son to break away from the parents and set up his own family as soon as he gets married. Among the Scheduled Tribe Palliyans, the total 25 families can be split up into ten simple families, five intermediate

Table No. XI

Communities and the types of families

Caste/ Community	Total number of households	Types of families living in the households: Simple	Intermediate	Joint	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Vellalar	124	59	26	14	25
Chakkiliar	102	56	19	18	9
Naidu	76	34	13	8	21
Konar	17	12	2	1	2

Table No. XI (contd.)

Communities and the type of families

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Valaiyar	13	10	2	...	1
Nadar	11	8	2	...	1
Pallan	7	6	...	1	...
Naicker	6	3	1	1	1
Gounder	4	1	2	1	...
Chettiar	3	3	...	...	...
Asari	2	2	...	...	...
Parayar	2	2	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	2	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	1	...	...	1
Agamudaiyar	1	...	1	...	...
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	1
Oddar	1	1	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	1
Maravar	1	...	1	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...	1	...	...
Christian	32	23	2	2	5
Muslim (Rowther)	7	3	2	...	2
,, (Pattani)	2	1	1	...	...
Total	418	227	75	46	70

families, four joint families and six other-type of families.

Age structure

101. The following statement indicates the age structure and sex composition of the village population.

Age-group	Males	Females	Total persons	Percentage
0— 4	148	114	262	14
5—14	225	212	437	23
15—24	202	167	369	19
25—34	166	183	349	18
35—44	133	128	261	13
45—59	102	93	195	1
60 & over	15	32	47	2
Total	991	929	1,920	100

The pyramidal representation of the age structure shows a broad base of infant and young population which tapers off rapidly in higher age groups. The proportion of younger population upto the age of 14 accounts for thirty-seven per cent of the total population and equals the population of young men and women of age group 15-34. The population of the age group 35-59 constitutes twenty-four per cent. There are 47 persons of the age group 60 and above, constituting two per cent of the total population. According to these figures, there are more old women than old men which supports, though not conclusively, the general notion that women have a greater surviving capacity than men in India.

Sex-ratio

102. In the sex-wise analysis of the population, males show a plus ratio, i.e., 1,076 males per 1,000 females and this could have resulted from two factors, viz., the natural increase of male birth and more migration of male population. The latter appears to be a more plausible reason. Being a plantation area, the village has an influx of more male population than female. Most of the plantation workers in the village are from plains who leave their family behind in the plains, stay here during season and return in the off-season. Similarly the employees of the public institutions in the village remain in the village without their family and return home on vacations. So the influx of larger male population results in an imbalance of the sex-ratio. However, the natural excess of sex-ratio in case of males cannot also be discounted. Among individuals in the age group 0-4, the male infants are more in number than the female ones. An age-groupwise sex-ratio is given in the statement below.

Age group	Males	Females	Sex-ratio
0— 4	148	114	770
5—14	225	212	942
15—24	202	167	827
25—34	166	183	1,102
35—44	133	128	962
45—59	102	93	912
60 & over	15	32	2,133

This table reveals that uniformly males preponder over females in all age groups except in age groups 25-34 and 60 and over. In the latter, of course, the natural reason that men pre-decease women provides an exception while in the other it is difficult to drop any definite conclusion. The corresponding sex-ratio of Palliyans living in the outskirts of the village is given in the statement below.

Age group	Males	Females	Sex-ratio
0— 4	9	6	667
5—14	5	6	1,200
15—24	11	5	455
25—34	7	8	1,143
35—44	4	7	1,750
45—59	4	3	750
60 & over	4	1	250
	44	36	818

Palliyans also have a plus proportion of males. But strangely enough the number of females in their old age are in the minus ratio among Palliyans unlike the generality of the people living in Sirumalai village proper.

Sex and communities

103. Apart from the study of general disparity of sexes in the village as a whole, an analysis of sex and communities would be interesting. The sex-ratio prevalent among the communities is shown in the statement below.

Community	Males	Females	Sex-ratio
Vellalar	305	298	977
Chakkiliar	253	251	992
Naidu	178	157	882
Gounder	9	13	1,444
Agamudaiyar	2	3	1,500
Brahmin	1	...	...
Pallan	15	16	1,067
Oddar	3	1	333
Pandithar	1	...	...
Pandaram	2	1	500
Kuravar	4	2	500
Maravar	2	2	1,000
Piramalaikallan	1	2	2,000
Parayar	4	4	1,000
Chettiar	4	4	1,000
Nadar	19	16	842
Valaiyar	38	33	868
Konar	38	35	921
Naicker	16	13	813
Asari	2	3	1,500
Christians	69	60	870
Muslims (Rowther)	17	10	588
„ (Pattani)	8	5	625

It can be seen in most of the major communities that the sex-ratio is minus for females and in communities like Gounder, Agamudaiyar, Pallan and Asari, the females are in plus ratio. Among the communities of Chettiars, Parayars, Maravars etc., the male and female populations are equally balanced numerically.

Marital status

104. The following table gives us some idea of the people with reference to marital status. From this table, we can easily conclude there are more females than males enjoying the marital status. Even among males, only five remain unmarried after 30.

Among Palliyans also none is found to be unmarried beyond the age of 45 among males and beyond 20 among females. The marital status of their population is shown separately in the table below.

Age group	Total population			Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or separated	
	P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
All Ages	80	44	36	24	13	18	19	2	3	...	1
0 — 4	15	9	6	9	6	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 — 9	6	3	3	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
10 —14	5	2	3	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
15 —19	9	6	3	6	1	...	2	...	...	...	...
20 —24	7	5	2	2	...	3	2	...	...	...	...
25 —29	7	2	5	...	...	2	4	...	1	...	...
30 —34	8	5	3	1	...	3	3	1	...	...	...
35 —44	11	4	7	1	...	3	6	...	...	...	1
45 —59	7	4	3	...	...	3	1	1	2	...	...
60 & over	5	4	1	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII

Age and Marital status

Community	Age group	Total population			Never married		Married		Widowed		Divoreed or separated		Unclassified status	
		P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Vellalar	All ages	603	305	298	187	123	110	119	6	54	2	2	...	...
	0 — 4	62	35	27	35	27	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	74	39	35	39	35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	71	36	35	36	35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	75	41	34	41	24	...	9	...	...	...	1	...	...
	20—24	57	32	25	26	2	5	23	...	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	48	25	23	8	...	15	21	1	2	1	...	...	...
	30—34	52	24	28	1	...	21	23	2	4	...	1	...	...
	35—44	82	39	43	...	...	38	29	1	14	...	...	...	...
	45—59	63	27	36	1	...	25	13	1	23	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	19	7	12	...	...	6	1	1	11	...	...	...	...
Chakkiliar	All ages	504	253	251	137	9[illegible]	114	125	1	27	1	3	...	...
	0 — 4	91	55	36	55	36	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	47	21	26	21	26	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	56	31	25	31	25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	39	23	16	21	6	2	9	...	...	...	1	...	...
	20—24	45	18	27	9	1	9	25	...	...	...	1	...	...
	25—29	51	21	30	...	2	21	28	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	51	23	28	...	...	22	26	...	2	1	...	...	...
	35—44	70	39	31	...	...	38	24	1	7	...	...	...	...
	45—59	45	19	26	...	...	19	13	...	12	...	1	...	...
	60 & over	9	3	6	...	...	3	...	...	6	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Naidu	All ages	335	178	157	106	70	62	63	8	22	2	2	...	...
	0 — 4	42	21	21	21	21	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	43	21	22	21	22	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	33	20	13	20	12	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	38	19	19	19	15	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	37	24	13	19	...	5	11	...	...	...	2	...	...
	25—29	24	15	9	5	...	10	9	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	23	13	10	1	...	11	9	...	1	1	...	...	...
	35—44	38	13	25	...	...	10	20	2	5	1	...	...	...
	45—59	46	28	18	...	...	22	7	6	11	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	11	4	7	...	...	4	2	...	5	...	...	...	...
Gounder	All ages	22	9	13	5	6	4	5	...	2	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	...	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	4	2	2	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	...	...	2	1	...		...	...	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Agamudaiyar	All ages	5	2	3	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	All ages	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Pallan	All ages	31	15	16	7	8	8	8	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	7	1	6	1	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	4	2	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	5	1	4	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	5	4	1	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	All ages	4	3	1	2	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Pandithar	All ages	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	All ages	3	2	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Kuravar	All ages	6	4	2	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	All ages	4	2	2	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (Contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Piramalaikallan	All ages	3	1	2	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Parayar	All ages	8	4	4	2	2	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 —	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Chettiar	All ages	8	4	4	1	1	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	3	2	1	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	All ages	35	19	16	8	6	10	9	1	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	6	2	4	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	5	4	1	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	5	3	2	1	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	4	...	4	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	7	4	3	...	...	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	3	3	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	...	...	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Valaiyar	All ages	71	38	33	26	19	12	12	...	2	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	17	10	7	10	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	16	10	6	10	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	9	4	5	4	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	1	2	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	3	2	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	6	2	4	...	...	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	11	6	5	...	...	6	4	...	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	All ages	73	38	35	21	14	16	16	1	4	...	1	...	...
	0 — 4	7	4	3	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	7	4	3	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	5	1	4	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	13	8	5	8	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	11	6	5	4	...	2	4	...	...	...	1	...	...
	25—29	6	3	3	.	...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	5	3	2	...	...	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	12	6	6	...	...	5	5	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	5	3		...	...	3	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Naicker	All ages	29	16	13	9	4	6	6	1	1	...	2	...	...
	0 — 4	9	6	3	6	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	2	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	5	2	3	...	...	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	3	2	1	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	4	2	2	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Asari	All ages	5	2	3	...	1	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Christian	All ages	129	69	60	35	29	29	29	5	2	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	17	8	9	8	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	14	6	8	6	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	17	8	9	8	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	10	7	3	7	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	8	3	5	2	...	1	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	13	8	5	3	...	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	11	5	6	...	...	4	6	1	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	22	11	11	1	...	9	10	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	17	13	4	...	...	10	3	3	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	All ages	27	17	10	11	4	5	5	1	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	4	3	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	4	2	2	2	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	2	2	..	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	6	4	2	...	...	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XII (contd.)

Age and Marital status

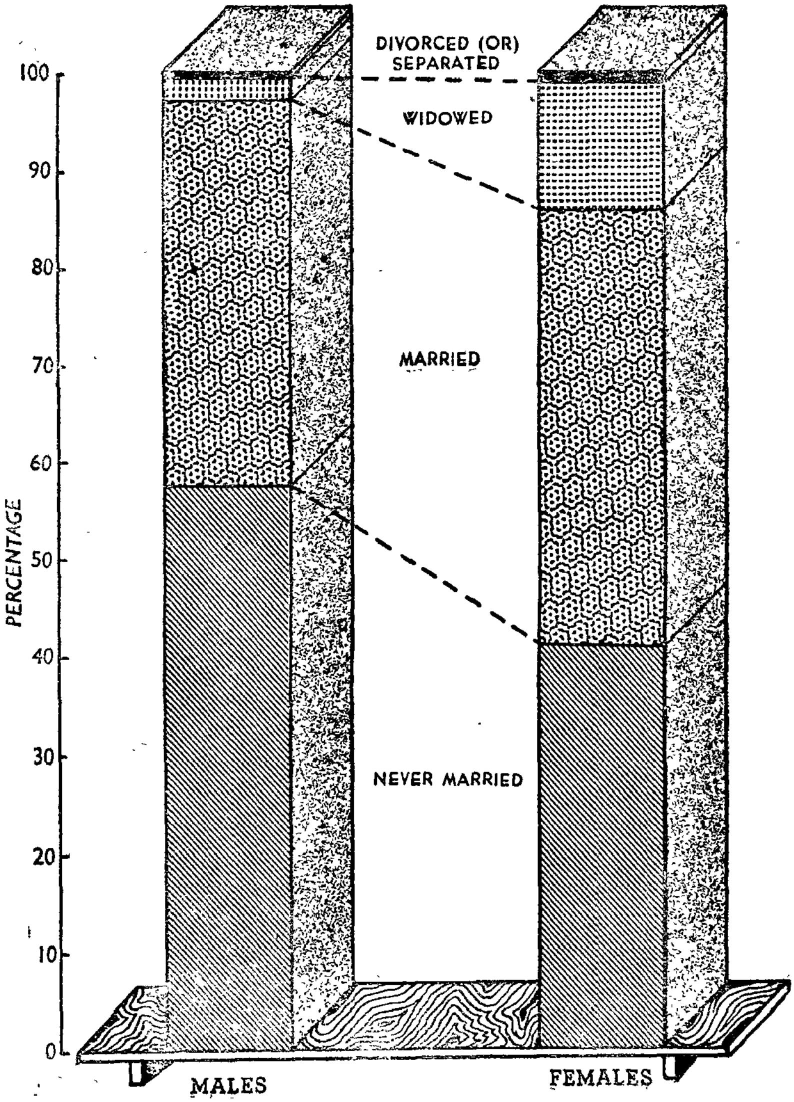
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Muslim (Pattani)	All ages	13	8	5	6	3	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Village Total	All ages	1,920	991	929	570	387	392	413	24	119	5	10	...	...
	0 — 4	265	149	116	149	116	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	230	115	115	115	115	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	206	109	97	109	96	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	194	111	83	109	54	2	26	...	...	...	3	...	...
	20—24	172	90	82	63	4	26	74	...	...	1	4	...	...
	25—29	174	85	89	20	2	63	85	1	2	1	...	...	...
	30—34	177	82	95	2	...	75	87	3	7	2	1	...	...
	35—44	260	133	127	1	...	125	98	6	29	1	...	...	...
	45—59	195	102	93	2	...	88	39	12	52	...	2	...	...
	60 & over	47	15	32	...	...	13	3	2	29	...	...	...	...

Age at marriage

105. Of the total 991 males, 42·5 per cent are married. Among females 42·48 per cent have entered into marital life The instances of early marriages among males have occurred at the age group 15-19 while among females it is at the age group 10-14.

Our survey reveals that a large percentage of males have entered marital life at the age group 30-34. The marital age for males is usually considered to be somewhere around twenty. Nearly 28·9 per cent in that age group have entered into marital life. There are a few cases of longstanding celibacy among males in the village. But these are only exceptional.

MARITAL STATUS



A few cases of pre-puberty marriages have been reported during our discussion with the representatives in the village and the main motive for such early marriages are a judicious mixture of social and economic considerations. It is said that some of these marriages are caused by the anxiety of the aged parents to see their children happily wedded and settled in family life before they pass away. Sometimes these marriages are contracted among near relatives by over-cautious elders who fear the possible introduction of a stranger, either male or female, into their family circles later. In less prosperous communities like Chakkiliars, Pallars and cooly workers among the caste Hindus, the economic consideration plays its own part. The early marriage brings an additional earning member to the family. Most of the girls in the village are married at the age of 20-24. But the marriageable age for a girl is usually between 15-19. The following table sufficiently explains the actual position.

Age group	Males		Females	
	Percentage of unmarried	Percentage of married	Percentage of unmarried	Percentage of married
10—14	100.00	...	99.00	1.00
15—19	98.2	1.8	65.10	34.90
20—24	70.0	30.0	65.06	34.04
25—29	23.5	76.5	2.20	97.80
30—34	2.4	97.6	...	100.00
35 & above	1.2	98.8	...	100.00

It could be clearly understood from the above figures that while about 3.6 per cent remain unmarried among males over 30, no female of that age group is left unmarried. Even in the age group 25-29, only a ngligible number of females, *i.e.*, 2.2 per cent remain unmarried.

Consanguineous marriage

106. Consanguineous marriages are common among all communities in the village. A sample study into this aspect gives the following figures as found in the table below.

Consanguineous pedigree dispartiy

Communities	No. of house-holds	No. of marri-ages	Own sister's daughter	Consanguineous marriages	
				Maternal uncle's daughters	Paternal aunt's daughters
Vellalar	50	67	8	6	10
Naidu	20	27	2	5	4
Chakkiliar	1	1	...	...	...
Maniam	9	12	...	3	6
Naicker	4	8	1	...	...
Oddar	2	2	...	...	...
Christian	3	3	...	...	...
Muslim	1	2	...	...	...
Total	90	122	11	14	20

122 sample marriages were taken up for study from ninety households of some selected communities. Of these, 45 marriages are found to be consanguineous. 11 marriages have taken place with ones own sister's daughters, 14 with maternal uucle's children and 20 with paternal aunt's children. The main motive behind such marriages is affinity towards one's own kin and in some communities, according to the caste tradition consanguineous marriages are preferred to marriages with strangers. Among Palliyans also consanguineous marriages are quite common. Out of twenty six marriages covered by our survey, eighteen have been with paternal aunt's daughters, one with maternal uncle's daughter and six with sister's daughters.

Widowhood

107. The table given elsewhere brings out in bold relief the large number of widows and widowers in the village. There are twenty-four widowers and 119 widows in the village. It is difficult to say why widows outnumber widowers. Perhaps it is due to the theory that women live longer than men. It is also due to the fact that a Hindu widow almost always prefers to remain single, the reason being, among other things, to guard the interests of her children.* In

some communities, widow remarriage is strictly prohibited. Even among communities which allow widow remarriage, only young widows are entitled to enter marriage a second time and the remarriage of old widows is looked down upon and resented by the community, and leads to social sarcasm.

A community-wise analysis shows that most of the widows are found among Vellalas, Naidus and Chakkiliars, the major communities in the village. But among Chakkiliars, widow remarriage is allowed while among Vellalas and Naidus, it has been proscribed by social tradition. Among the other communities like Parayas, Pallars, Vadugars, Pandithar, Kallar, Veduvans, Servai and Maravars, widow remarriage is allowed. Among Christians and Muslims, there is religious sanction for widow remarriage. Among the Palliyans, five are widowed, *i.e.*, two males and three females. In spite of the fact that among Palliyans widow remarriage is only too common a thing, there is a young widow found in the age group 25-29. An age-groupwise analysis shows that there are altogether thirteen widowed persons. *i.e.*, four males and nine females within thirty-five years of age. Of the remaining, thirty-five are within the age of 35-44 and others are forty-five and above in age.

Divorce

108. Divorce has no social sanction among communities like Vellalas, Naidus, Naickers, Yadhavas and other high castes in the village. Some of the communities like Parayas, Pallans, Vadugar, Ambattan Chakkilians, Kallar, Maravar and Servai allow divorce. But strangely enough, our survey shows a high frequency of divorce among communities which have proscribed it traditionally. Almost all the fifteen cases of divorce are found among Vellalas, Naidus, Naickers and Konars etc. It has to be understood that these divorces are neither legally decreed or adjudicated by caste council. Instead they are more or less non-legal separations either caused by domestic misunderstanding, or temperamental incompatibility, moral lapses etc. by either of the parties. These separations have got to go through some petty formalities dictated by caste traditions.

Among Scheduled Castes Chakkilians, Pallans and Parayans, divorce is effected by the caste council for which the initiating party has to pay an amount equal to the 'Pariyam' to the caste council.

Literacy level

109. One prominent fact about the village is that a good majority of its population are illiterates. Educational facilities are still not upto the mark. People still do not seem to exhibit any noticeable tendency to educate their children. Though the value of education in the present day world is somewhat felt, since most of the people happen to be economically backward and since some children are also earning members of some families, education is not receiving the attention it should from the parents. Our findings are shown in the Table No. XIII below.

The above figures will show that illiteracy dominates the village and 66·4 per cent of its people are illiterates. Even among literates, 65·0 per cent are just literates without having attained any formal educational standard and 32.5 per cent have not gone beyond the primary standard. Only very few people have studied upto School Final Class. They form a total of just sixteen persons. Eleven among them have finished S.S.L.C. and three have finished their Intermediate. There are two Graduates from this village, one a boy and the other a girl. This provides the silver lining to an otherwise gloomy picture.

Literacy and sex

110. The disparity between male and female literacy is more marked in the village. This is indeed characteristic of our country itself. This is the result of an ancient, deep-seated prejudice against female education in our country. Not even one per cent of the people in the village would vote for female education. Most of the people think that women are cut out by nature for household drudgery and their sphere of activity is confined to the four walls of the home only. They think that some nominal education for girls would quite suffice and higher education would not help them in any way to fulfil the duties, Nature has imposed upon them. There are many people who hold the opinion that higher education would positively handicap the womenfolk in the proper discharge of their duties. The girls after attaining puberty are kept at home and not allowed to freely move about in the village. It naturally follows that a girl's education stops with her thirteenth or fourteenth year. That is to say the attainment of puberty draws a curtain over her education. This is not so nowadays in the plains, but in a place like Sirumalai where the ray of modern knowledge has not penetrated, the old

Table No. XIII

Education

Caste/ Community	Age group	Total population			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or Junior Basic		Matric or Higher Secondary		Inter-mediate or P.U.C		Gradu-ated	
		P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M	F.	M.	F.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Vellalar	All ages	603	305	298	108	198	116	69	76	29	4	1	1	...	...	1
	0 — 4	62	35	27	35	27	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	74	39	35	12	14	27	21	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	71	36	35	9	11	17	16	10	8	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	75	41	34	11	16	16	6	14	10	...	1	...	...	...	1
	20—24	57	32	25	8	15	10	6	12	4	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	48	25	23	7	14	7	7	9	2	2	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	52	24	28	3	17	10	7	11	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	82	39	43	9	37	17	5	12	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	63	27	36	12	35	9	1	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	19	7	12	2	12	3	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chakkiliar	All ages	504	253	251	199	240	48	10	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	91	55	36	55	36	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	47	21	26	17	21	4	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	56	31	25	17	20	13	4	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	39	23	16	20	16	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	45	18	27	14	27	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	51	21	30	17	29	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	51	23	28	14	28	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	70	39	31	27	31	11	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	45	19	26	15	26	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	9	3	6	3	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Naidu	All ages	335	178	157	68	107	57	35	48	15	4	...	...	...	1	...
	0 — 4	42	21	21	21	21	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	43	21	22	6	8	15	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	33	20	13	5	4	11	7	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	38	19	19	5	8	4	6	8	5	2	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	37	24	13	5	6	5	2	14	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	24	15	9	3	6	5	2	6	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
	30—34	23	13	10	3	7	4	2	5	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	38	13	25	4	23	6	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	46	28	18	15	17	4	1	8	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	11	4	7	1	7	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gounder	All ages	22	9	13	8	13	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	...	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	4	2	2	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60& over	2	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Agamudaiyar	All ages	5	2	3	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	All ages	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Pallan	All ages	31	15	16	10	16	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	7	1	6	1	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	1	1	1	[illegible]	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	4	2	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	5	1	4	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	5	4	1	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	All ages	4	3	1	3		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Pandithar	All ages	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	All ages	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Kuravar	All ages	6	4	2	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	65—59	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	All ages	4	2	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Piramalaikallan	All ages	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parayar	All ages	8	4	4	3	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Chettiar	All ages	8	4	4	3	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	3	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	All ages	35	19	16	12	15	4	...	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	6	2	4	2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	5	4	1	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	5	3	2	...	1	2	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	4	...	4	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	7	4	3	2	3	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	3	3	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Valaiyar	All ages	71	38	33	27	33	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	17	10	7	10	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	16	10	6	6	6	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	9	4	5	2	5	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	6	2	4	...	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	11	6	5	4	5	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	All ages	73	38	35	13	29	18	6	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	7	4	3	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	7	4	3	...	3	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	5	1	4	...	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	13	8	5	2	1	4	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	11	6	5	...	3	1	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	6	3	3	...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	5	3	2	...	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	12	6	6	5	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	5	3	2	2	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Naicker	All ages	29	16	13	11	11	2	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	9	6	3	6	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	2	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	2	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	5	2	3	...	2	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	3	2	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	4	2	2	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	All ages	5	2	3	1	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

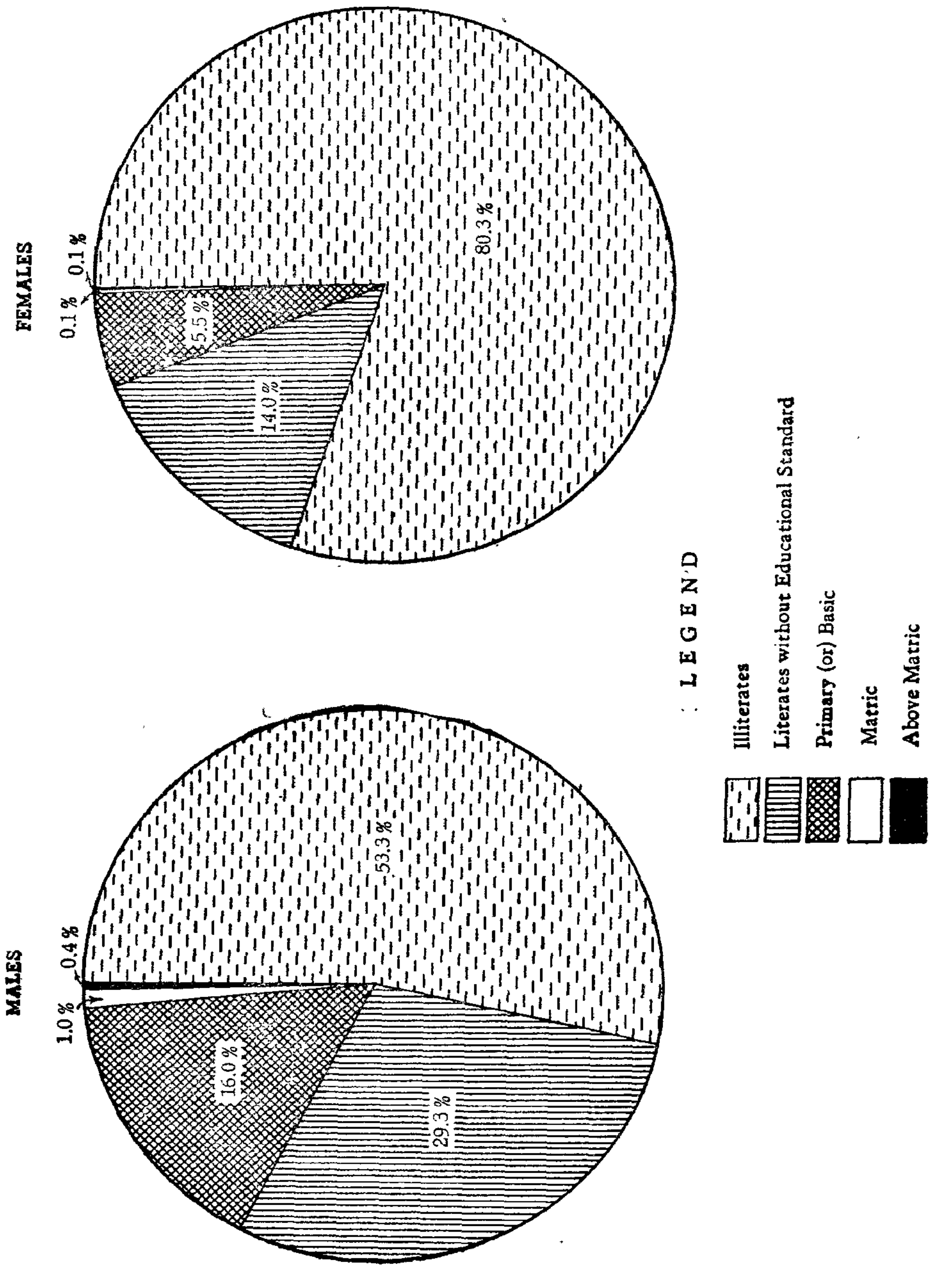
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Christian	All ages	129	69	60	47	53	13	5	7	2	1	...	1	...	...	...
	0 — 4	17	8	9	8	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	14	6	8	6	7	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	17	8	9	7	7	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	10	7	3	2	3	1	...	3	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	20—24	8	3	5	2	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	13	8	5	4	5	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	11	5	6	...	6	2	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	22	11	11	8	9	3	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	17	13	4	10	4	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	All ages	27	17	10	3	7	9	2	4	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
	0 — 4	3	1	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	4	3	1	...	...	3	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	4	2	2	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	30—34	2	...	2	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	6	4	2	1	2	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIII (contd.)

Education

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Muslim Pattani)	All ages	13	8	5	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Village Total	All ages	1,920	991	929	528	746	290	130	159	51	10	1	3	...	1	1
	0 — 4	265	149	116	149	116	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	230	115	115	58	72	57	43	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	206	109	97	45	56	49	28	15	13	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	194	111	83	45	49	33	17	29	15	3	1	1	...	...	1
	20—24	172	90	82	31	59	22	12	35	11	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	174	85	89	34	75	25	10	22	4	2	...	1	...	1	...
	30—34	177	82	95	27	79	33	11	20	5	2	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	260	133	127	68	117	45	7	19	3	1	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	195	102	93	64	91	20	2	17	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	47	15	32	7	32	6	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

LITERACY LEVELS



social prejudice against female education is still vigorously operative.

In Sirumalai there are 463 literates among the male population forming about 71·2 per cent of the total number of literates whereas the number of female literates is only 183. Among females, two have taken up studies after finishing their S S.L.C., one of them now being a graduate. The statement below gives the percentage distribution of the male and female population of the village according to their educational attainments.

Educational status	In percentage	
	Male	Female
Illiterates	53.3	80.3
Literates without educational standard	29.3	14.0
Primary or Junior Basic	16.00	5.5
Matriculation	1.00	0.1
Intermediate	0 3	...
Graduate	0.1	0.1

The literacy level both for males and females, as can be seen from the above table is, of course, low.

Literacy and community

111· A study of communitywise level of literacy would be interesting. The following is the educational status of the different communities in the village.

Community	Illiterates	Literates
Vellalar	50.7	49.3
Chakkiliar	87-1	22-9
Naidu	52.2	47,8
Gounder	95.5	4.6
Agamudaiyar	100 00	...
Brahmin	...	100.00
Pallan	‹3.4	26.6
Oddar	100.00	...
Pandithar	...	100.00
Pandaram	100.00	...
Kuravar	100.00	...
Maravar	75.00	25.00
Piramalaikallan	100·00	...
Parayar	87·5	12·5
Chettiar	87·5	12·5
Nadar	77·14	22·8
Valaiyar	84·5	15.5
Konar	57·5	42·5
Naicker	75·9	24·1
Asari	80.00	20·00
Christians	77·5	22·5
Muslim (Rowther)	37·00	63·00
„ (Pattani)	30·8	69·2

It can be seen from the above figures that in some of the communities like Agamudaiyar, Oddar, Pandaram, Kuravar, Piramalaikallan etc., the percentage of literates is absolutely Nil. In their scale of values, education seems to have no place at all and a great number of them think that education is something that they do not need and that it is a big luxury. Almost all these communities live a hand-to-mouth existence and are economically at an abysmal level. They send their children into plantation for work and make them earn their bread, even at a tender age.

Among the Scheduled Tribe Palliyans, none has been returned as literate.

Educational Institutions

112. There are three schools in the village, one for each hamlet. Education is imparted upto Vth Standard and for Higher Primary Education, they go to the nearby village of Tabasimedai, which is at a distance of 6–7 miles on the north-east which is connected to Sirumalai by a bridle path. For High School education, the children are sent to Dindigul where there are three or four High Schools and the

boys study as day scholars staying at some relatives' house, or in hostels. The three schools in the three hamlets of Sirumalai village are housed in small old buildings and the attendance appears not very encouraging. During coffee picking season and the season of harvesting other produce in the plantations, the attendance in the schools is particularly poor. There are six teachers in these three schools put together. Due to hardships and difficulties naturally attendant upon life in a backward hill village like Sirumalai with practically no transport facilities, teachers are unwilling to go and serve in this village. Even when the Panchayat Union managed to send some teachers here, some of them leave their families behind in Dindigul or their native place in the plains. The teachers do not have comfortable living accommodation and the cold climate often tells upon their health. Though the teachers may not be averse to working in hill parts, a place like Sirumalai which looks not unlike a primitive survival, is scarcely liked by anybody.

The schools do not have enough playing materials for the children nor is there enough space for playground purpose. There is also a library which is mere a library for name's sake. It is scarcely used by the children and there seems to be more insects in these libraries than books.

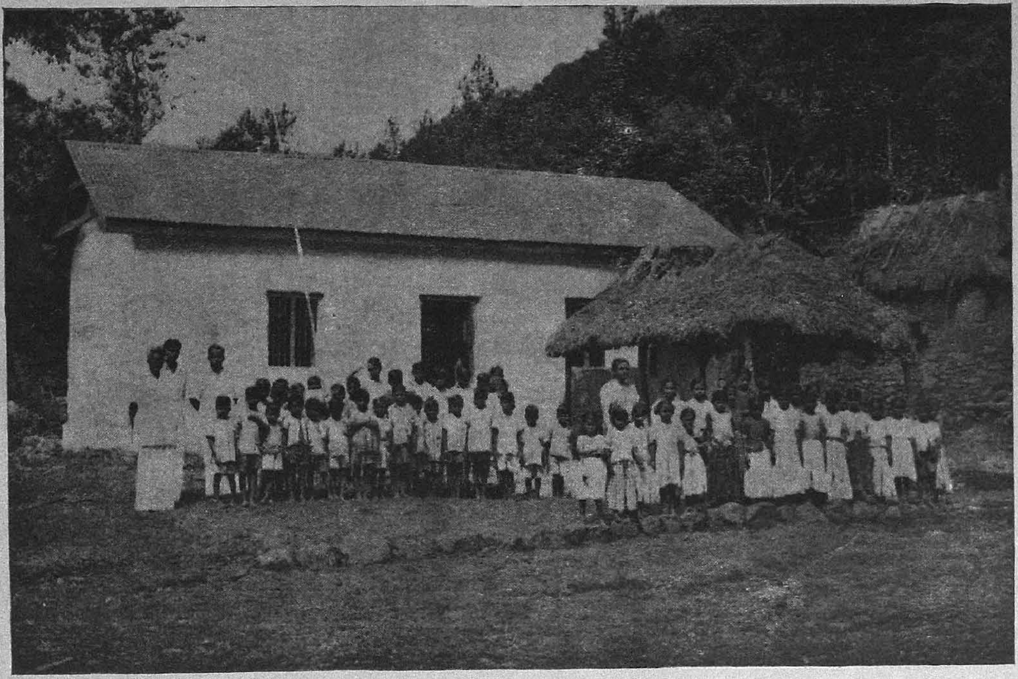
Apart from these three schools, there is a Montessori School run by the "Mathar Sangham" in the village. The school was started two years ago. Infant children are taught here. It is a sort of Kindergarten School where alphabets, the writing and reading of some household words, and good manners are taught. The schools seem to be struggling for existence. The villagers do not seem to take any great interest in the school and the children that one sees in the school are not very great models of cleanliness.

Working population

113. An analysis of the working population of the village would be greatly helpful to the study of the economy of the village and throw a good deal of light on the social life of the people also. Our findings in this aspect are detailed in the Table No. XIV.

According to the said figures, the economically active sector of the village constitute 54.2 per cent of the total population, 62.4 per cent of them being males and 37.4 per cent being females. The exploitation of male labour force of the village is more or less complete, but among females only 41.87 per cent are economically active while a large majority of the female population have been returned as non-workers. Since most of the male members in the working age are employed, the burden of dependency is not high. According to our calculation, it comes to 9 dependents per every 10 workers. The dependency rates vary from community to community. Among Vellalas, Naidus, Naickers, etc.. who generally do not send their wives for outdoor work, the dependency rate is a little higher and it comes to more than one person for each individual worker. But among the other economically less prosperous communities and especially among the Scheduled Castes, the dependency rate is too low. This would mean that in every household of these communities, the number of workers is fairly large, sometims, almost all the members of the household are workers except small babies. The contribution of various communities to the village labour force can be understood from the following statement.

Communities	Total No. of households	Workers	Worker per households
Vellalar	124	287	2·3
Chakkiliar	102	313	3·1
Naidu	76	167	2·2
Gounder	4	15	3·8
Pallan	7	19	2·7
Nadar	11	23	2·1
Valaiyar	13	22	1·7
Konar	17	47	2·8
Naicker	6	13	2·2
Other Hindu castes	17	31	1·8
Christians	32	79	2·5
Muslims	9	25	2·8



The Elementary School in the main hamlet.

WORKING FORCE

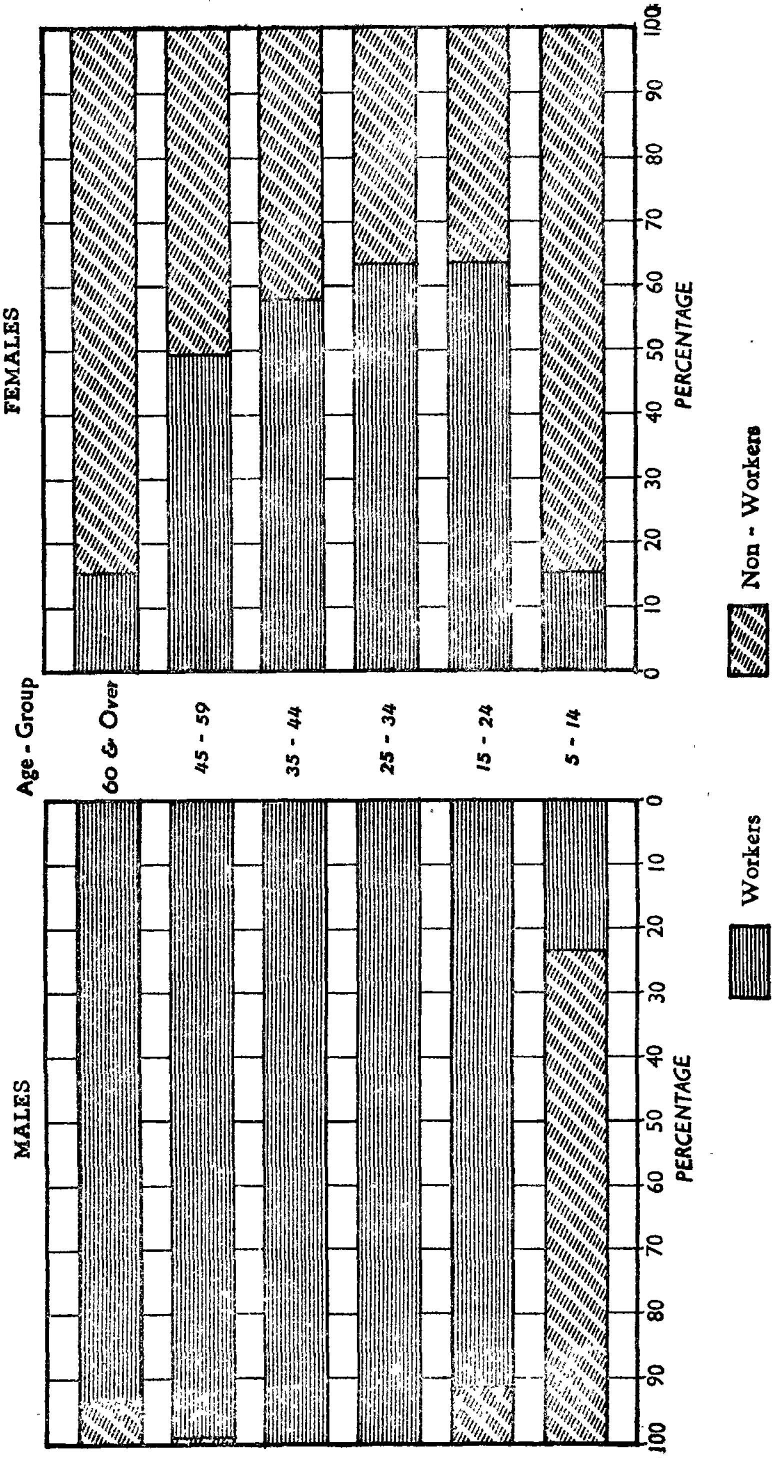


Table No. XIV

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

Caste/ Community	Age group	Total population			Workers			Non-workers		
		Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Vellalar	All ages	603	305	298	287	198	89	316	107	209
	0 — 4	62	35	27	...	...	...	62	35	27
	5 — 9	74	39	35	1	...	1	73	39	34
	10—14	71	36	35	17	11	6	54	25	29
	15—19	75	41	34	55	37	18	20	4	16
	20—24	57	32	25	39	29	10	18	3	15
	25—29	48	25	23	32	25	7	16	...	16
	30—34	52	24	28	36	24	12	16	...	16
	35—44	82	39	43	55	39	16	27	...	27
	45—59	63	27	36	44	27	17	19	...	19
	60 & over	19	7	12	8	6	2	11	1	10
Chakkiliar	All ages	504	253	251	313	167	146	191	86	105
	0 — 4	91	55	36	...	...	...	91	55	36
	5 — 9	47	21	26	5	2	3	42	19	23
	10—14	56	31	25	35	19	16	21	12	9
	15—19	39	23	16	37	23	14	2	...	2
	20—24	45	18	27	41	18	23	4	...	4
	25—29	51	21	30	48	21	27	3	...	3
	30—34	51	23	28	45	23	22	6	...	6
	35—44	70	39	31	62	39	23	8	...	8
	45—59	45	19	26	36	19	17	9	...	9
	60 & over	9	3	6	4	3	1	5	...	5

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Naidu	All ages	335	178	157	167	117	50	168	61	107
	0 — 4	42	21	21	...	...	...	42	21	21
	5 — 9	43	21	22	4	3	1	39	18	21
	10—14	33	20	13	8	6	2	25	14	11
	15—19	38	19	19	26	15	11	12	4	8
	20—24	37	24	13	25	21	4	12	3	9
	25—29	24	15	9	17	15	2	7	...	7
	30—34	23	13	10	20	13	7	3	...	3
	35—44	38	13	25	26	13	13	12	...	12
	45—59	46	28	18	35	27	8	11	1	10
	60 & over	11	4	7	6	4	2	5	...	5
Gounder	All ages	22	9	13	15	9	6	7	...	7
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	5 — 9	3	...	3	...	...	...	3	...	3
	10—14	4	2	2	4	2	2	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	3	3	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	2	2	...	1	...	1
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	2

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Agamudaiyar	All ages	5	2	3	3	1	2	2	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	...	...	..	2	1	1
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	30—34	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	..	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	—	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	All ages	1	1	..	1	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Pallan	All ages	31	15	16	19	12	7	12	3	9
	0 — 4	3	2	1	...	...	...	3	2	1
	5 — 9	7	1	6	...	...	...	7	1	6
	10—14	2	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	1
	15—19	3	3	...	3	3	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	4	2	2	3	2	1	1	...	1
	30—34	5	1	4	5	1	4	...	...	...
	35—44	5	4	1	5	4	1	...	...	..
	45—59	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	All ages	4	3	1	2	1	1	2	2	...
	0 — 4	2	2	...	...	...	...	2	2	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Pandithar	All ages	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	All ages	3	2	1	3	2	1	...	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Kuravar	All ages	6	4	2	4	3	1	2	1	1
	0 — 4	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	1
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	All ages	4	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Piramalaikallan	All ages	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	...	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Parayar	All ages	8	4	4	4	3	1	4	1	3
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	1	2	...	...	...	3	1	2
	10—14	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	1
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Chettiar	All ages	8	4	4	6	3	3	2	1	1
	0 — 4	2	1	1	...	...	...	2	1	1
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	3	1	2	...	...	...
	30—34	3	2	1	3	2	1	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	All ages	35	19	16	23	13	10	12	6	6
	0 — 4	6	2	4	..	.	..	6	2	4
	5 — 9	5	4	1	...		...	5	4	1
	10—14	2	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	5	3	2	5	3	2	...	...	...
	25—29	4	...	4	4	...	4	...	...	...
	30—34	7	4	3	7	4	3	...	...	...
	35—44	3	3	...	3	3	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	2	1	2	2	...	1	...	1
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Valaiyar	All ages	71	38	33	22	17	5	49	21	28
	0 — 4	17	10	7	...	...	...	17	10	7
	5 — 9	16	10	6	1	1	...	15	9	6
	10—14	9	4	5	4	2	2	5	2	3
	15—19	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	...	1
	20—24	3	2	1	3	2	1	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	1	1	...	2	...	2
	30—34	6	2	4	2	2	...	4	...	4
	35—44	11	6	5	7	6	1	4	...	4
	45—59	3	2	1	2	2	...	1	...	1
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	All ages	73	38	35	47	28	19	26	10	16
	0 — 4	7	4	3	...	...	...	7	4	3
	5 — 9	7	4	3	...	...	...	7	4	3
	10—14	5	1	4	2	...	2	3	1	2
	15—19	13	8	5	11	7	4	2	1	1
	20—24	11	6	5	9	6	3	2	...	2
	25—29	6	3	3	6	3	3	...	...	...
	30—34	5	3	2	5	3	2	...	...	...
	35—44	12	6	6	11	6	5	1	...	1
	45—59	5	3	2	3	3	...	2	...	2
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	2

Table No. XIV (contd)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Naicker	All ages	29	16	13	13	8	5	16	8	8
	0 — 4	9	6	3	...	...	...	9	6	3
	5 — 9	3	2	1	...	...	...	3	2	1
	10—14	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	15—19	2	...	2	1	...	1	1	...	1
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	5	2	3	3	2	1	2	...	2
	30—34	3	2	1	3	2	1	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	4	2	2	4	2	2	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Asari	All ages	5	2	3	3	2	1	2	...	2
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	30—34	2	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Christian	All ages	129	69	60	79	47	32	50	22	28
	0 — 4	17	8	9	...	...	...	17	8	9
	5 — 9	14	6	8	...	...	...	14	6	8
	10—14	17	8	9	7	2	5	10	6	4
	15—19	10	7	3	8	5	3	2	2	...
	20—24	8	3	5	8	3	5	...	...	...
	25—29	13	8	5	11	8	3	2	...	2
	30—34	11	5	6	10	5	5	1	...	1
	35—44	22	11	11	21	11	10	1	...	1
	45—59	17	13	4	14	13	1	3	...	3
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	All ages	27	17	10	17	11	6	10	6	4
	0 — 4	3	1	2	...	...	...	3	1	2
	5 — 9	2	2	...	...	...	...	2	2	...
	10—14	4	3	1	1	...	1	3	3	...
	15—19	4	2	2	3	2	1	1	...	1
	20—24	2	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	...	2	2	...	2	...	...	...
	35—44	6	4	2	6	4	2	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	60 & over	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIV (contd.)

Workers and Non-workers by sex and broad age groups

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Muslim (Pattani)	All ages	13	8	5	8	6	2	5	2	3
	0 — 4	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	...	...	...	2	1	1
	10—14	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	15—19	3	3	...	3	3	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
	35—44	2	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Village Total	All ages	1,920	991	929	1,041	652	389	879	339	540
	0 — 4	265	149	116	...	...	...	265	149	116
	5 — 9	230	115	115	12	7	5	218	108	110
	10—14	206	109	97	83	46	37	123	63	60
	15—19	194	111	83	153	100	53	41	11	30
	20—24	172	90	82	136	84	52	36	6	30
	25—29	174	85	89	139	85	54	35	...	35
	30—34	177	82	95	145	82	63	32	...	32
	35—44	260	133	127	207	133	74	53	...	53
	45—59	195	102	93	147	101	46	48	1	47
	60 & over	47	15	32	19	14	5	28	1	27

Child labour

114. The tapping of labour force in the village starts at the early age of 5-9, both among males and females, There are twelve child labourers, seven boys and five girls in this age group. There are eighty-three young workers in the age group 10-14. Most of the child workers assist their parents in plantation work and some of them, especially in the age group 5-9 are in charge of tending the grazing cattle. This is the reason why most children belonging to the economically backward communities abstain from school. Most of these child workers are found among Vellalas and Chakkilians. A good number of them are employed as plantation coolies and supplement the meagre family income.

Aged workers

115. By aged workers we mean people above sixty. Only technically they may be called aged workers, but quite a number of them are capable of exerting themselves on the soil continuously for hours and their physical stamina is hardly below par. Some of them have a lust for work and abstention from work might even make them uneasy. Some of them have a hardened constitution and even skilled work they readily undertake and execute satisfactorily. Their physical hardihood would be a surprise to urban folk. They are found among the poorer sections of the Vellalas, Chakkilians, Naidus and Muslims.

Female workers

116. The working class women of Sirumalai seem to combine a gaiety of spirit with sturdiness of limbs. When they are working in plantations in groups, one is impressed by the strains of music that emanate from them. As they are engaged in work, they now and then sing some popular songs, not from the cine pictures, but songs supplied by hoary traditional legends. As among males, the labour force among women is tapped at an early age, even before the girls have attained their tenth year. During our survey, it was found that there are five female labourers in the age group 5-9 and thirty seven female labourers in the age group 10-14. Five women aged over sixty are also active workers, earning their bread by the sweat of their brow.

Non-workers

117. The non-working section of the village constitute 45. 8 per cent of the total population. A good number of them are infants, school-going children and persons permanently disabled. They account for a total of 228 males and 240 females and constitute 53.2 per cent of the total non-working population. House-wives form about 26 8 per cent of the non-working population. The remaining are full-time students. The various activities of the non-working population among different communities in the village are shown in the table below.

Table No. XV

Non–wor rs by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

		Persons Non-workers										
Caste/ community	Age group	Total Non-workers			Full time students or children attending school		Persons engaged only in household duties		Dependents, infants and children not attending school and persons permanently disabled		Others (N. E.)	
		P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Vellalar	All ages	316	107	209	52	35	...	110	55	63	...	1
	0 — 4	62	35	27	...	...	...	...	35	27	...	...
	5 — 9	73	39	34	23	21	...	...	16	13	...	...
	10—14	54	25	29	22	13	...	9	3	7	...	...
	15—19	20	4	16	4	1	...	14	...	...	...	1
	20—24	18	3	15	3	...	...	15	...	...	...	...
	25—29	16	...	16	...	...	...	16	...	...	...	...
	30—34	16	...	16	...	...	...	16	...	...	...	...
	35—44	27	...	27	...	...	...	26	...	1	...	...
	45—59	19	...	19	...	...	...	12	...	7	...	...
	60 & over	11	1	10	...	...	...	2	1	8	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Chakkiliar	All ages	191	86	105	12	7	...	33	74	65	...	...
	0 — 4	91	55	36	...	...	...	...	55	36	..	...
	5 — 9	42	19	23	4	4	...	1	15	18	...	...
	10—14	21	12	9	8	3	...	3	4	3	...	...
	15—19	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
	20—24	4	...	4	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	...	3	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
	30—34	6	...	6	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...
	35—44	8	...	8	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	...
	45—59	9	...	9	...	...	...	6	...	3	...	...
	60 & over	5	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...
Naidu	All ages	168	61	107	30	17	...	55	31	35	...	...
	0 — 4	42	21	21	...	...	...	...	21	21	...	...
	5 — 9	39	18	21	12	13	...	1	6	7	...	...
	10—14	25	14	11	12	4	...	7	2	...	...	...
	15—19	12	4	8	4	...	...	7	...	1	...	...
	20—24	12	3	9	2	...	...	9	1	...	...	...
	25—29	7	...	7	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	...
	30—34	3	...	3	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
	35—44	12	...	12	...	...	...	11	...	1	...	...
	45—59	11	1	10	...	...	...	8	1	2	...	...
	60 & over	5	...	5	...	...	...	2	...	3	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Gounder	All ages	7	...	7	...	...	...	2	...	5	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	5 — 9	3	...	3	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Agamudaiyar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	—	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Pallar	All ages	12	3	9	...	...	...	2	3	7	...	...
	0 — 4	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...
	5 — 9	7	1	6	...	...	...	...	1	6	...	
	10—14	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	All ages	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
	0 — 4	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Kuravar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Piramalai-kallan	All ages	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Parayar	All ages	4	1	3	...	...	...	1	1	2	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Chettiar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	0 — 4	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	All ages	12	6	6	...	...	...	1	6	5	...	...
	0 — 4	6	2	4	...	...	...	...	2	4	...	...
	5 — 9	5	4	1	...	...	...	.	4	1	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Valaiyar	All ages	49	21	28	4	...	...	11	17	17	...	...
	0 — 4	17	10	7	...	...	...	...	10	7	...	...
	5 — 9	15	9	6	3	...	...	1	6	5	...	...
	10—14	5	2	3	1	...	...	...	1	3	...	...
	15—19	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
	30—34	4	...	4	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...
	35—44	4	...	4	...	...	...	3	...	1	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	All ages	26	10	16	5	...	...	6	5	10	...	...
	0 — 4	7	4	3	...	...	...	...	4	3	...	...
	5 — 9	7	4	3	4	...	...	...	...	3	...	...
	10—14	3	1	2	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
	15—19	2	1	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...
	20—24	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	2	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Naicker	All ages	16	8	8	1	1	...	3	7	4	...	...
	0 — 4	9	6	3	...	...	...	...	6	3	...	...
	5 — 9	3	2	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Asari	All ages	2	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
	0 — 4	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Muslim (Rowther)	All ages	10	6	4	5	...	...	2	1	2	...	...
	0 — 4	3	1	2	...	...	...	..	1	2	...	...
	5 — 9	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	—	...
	10—14	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	All ages	5	2	3	...	1	...	1	2	1	...	...
	0 — 4	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	5 — 9	2	1	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
	10—14	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XV (contd.)

Non-workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Christian	All ages	50	22	28	2	2	...	7	20	19	...	...
	0 — 4	17	8	9	...	...	...	...	8	9	...	...
	5 — 9	14	6	8	...	1	...	...	6	7	...	...
	10—14	10	6	4	...	1	...	1	6	2	...	...
	15—19	2	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..
	25—29	2	...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
	45—59	3	...	3	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Village (Total)	All ages	879	339	540	111	63	...	236	228	240	...	1
	0 — 4	265	149	116	...	...	...	...	149	116	...	..
	5 — 9	218	108	110	49	41	...	4	59	65	...	...
	10—14	123	63	60	47	21	...	22	16	17	...	...
	15—19	41	11	30	10	1	...	27	1	1	...	1
	20—24	36	6	30	5	...	...	30	1	...	...	...
	25—29	35	...	35	...	...	...	35	...	...	...	...
	30—34	32	...	32	...	...	...	32	...	...	...	...
	35—44	53	...	53	...	...	...	50	...	3	...	...
	45—59	48	1	47	...	...	...	32	1	15	...	...
	60 & over	28	1	27	...	...	...	4	1	23	...	...

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE ECONOMY

118. The outstanding feature of the economy of Sirumalai is its more or less total dependence on coffee and banana plantations. The Sirumalai Hill has the required soil fertility, mild temperature, high humidity, elevation and rainfall for the prosperous growth and development of estates and fruit gardens. The large scale plantations, extending over 100 and more acres are only too few, the biggest of them being 'Joseph Coffee Estates', formerly owned by the Jesuit Missionaries and now by an enterprising planter from the village Pattiveeranpatti, about twenty five miles from Dindigul. There are some four or five planters who own more than fifty acres of plantations. But small plantations with an extent of 5, 10, 12 or 15 and sometimes twenty acres are quite large in number. The poorer sections of the village population earn their bread by working in these plantations. Since labour is in constant demand in these plantations, workers migrate to this village from the plains also. Almost all the plantations here are well managed, properly administered and enthusiastically developed. Quite a few plantation owners are employing modern agricultural methods and are successfully improving the yield and keeping the crops free of diseases.

Occupational classification

119. The occupational classification of the working population in the village is as follows :

Plantation owners; Plantation coolies;

Business; Industry; Other occupations;

Our findings are indicated in Table No. XVI:

The plantation labourers are numerically larger than other occupational groups and constitute 49.76 per cent of the total households. This includes households that depend on it mainly, secondarily and even tertiarily. Of them, 189 households depend mainly on it while nineteen households have other subsidiary occupations such as bee-keeping, domestic service etc. Besides, the members of the households of 66 petty plantation owners and a businessman work as plantation coolies also for some days of the month. Next come the plantation owners who account for a total of 140 households. Seventy one among them depend primarily on it while the remaining households have subsidiary occupations like teaching, plantation work etc. 52 households are engaged in business and industry, viz., 11 households in business and forty one in industry. The business in the village is of several categories like fruit selling, running provision stores, betel nut shops, selling rice cakes and dosais in the morning and selling of eatables. The types of business carried on in the village is given in Table No. XVII.

The industrial avocations pursued in the village are tailoring, carpentry and bee-keeping. Bee-keeping is an important household industry in the village and a Government Apiarist is stationed in the village and assists the villagers in bee-hive maintaining and honey gathering. Thirty eight households pursue other various occupations. Among them, there are seventeen watchmen and five teachers. The remaining are village officials, postal runner, cattle tender etc.

Workers in major occupations

120. A comprehensive idea of the occupational structure can be obtained from the individual analysis of the workers. As a first step, a broad classification of the workers under the headings cultivation, household industry, household business and other occupations has been attempted and given in the Table No. XVIII.

The total working force in the village can be divided into two major occupational groups, viz. cultivation and other occupations. There are 287 workers engaged in plantation cultivation. As many as 745 workers, i.e., 71.57 per cent of the total working force are engaged in other occupations, a majority of whom are coolies depending on plantation.

Table No. XVI

Occupational classifications of households

Caste/ Community	Total number of house-holds	Plantation owner				Plantation cooly							
		Plan-tation owner only	Plan-tation owner and Plan-tation cooly	Plan-tation owner and Village Official	Plan-tation owner and Teacher and Bee-keeping	Plan-tation cooly only	Plan-tation cooly and Watch-man	Plan-tation cooly and Postal Runner	Plan-tation cooly and Pony rearing	Plan-tation cooly and Domestic servant	Plan-tation cooly and Bee-keeping	Plan-tation cooly and Maistry	Plan-tation cooly, Shepherd and Watchman
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Vellalar	124	26	25	2	...	37	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Chakkiliar	102	12	22	...	...	63	1	1	...	...	1	...	...
Naidu	76	29	10	...	...	14	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	17	1	...	...	...	13	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	13	1	7	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Nadar	11	...	...	...	...	9	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...	5	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	6	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gounder	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVI (contd.)

Occupational classifications of households

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Asari	2	...	...	...	..	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parayan	2	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	...	1	...	1	23	3	...	...	...	...	1	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	1	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
,, (Pattani)	2	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	418	71	66	2	1	189	11	1	1	1	3	1	1

Table No. XVI (contd.)

Occupational classifications of households

Caste/ Community	Business			Industry			Other occupations								
	Business only	Business and Plantation owner	Business and Plantation cooly	Industry only	Bee keeping and Cultivation	Bee keeping, Plantation owner and Betel-nut shop	Branch Post Master and Homeopathy doctor	Bee keeping Junior field man	Teacher	Watchman	Temple Priest	Writer and clerk in Estate	General cooly	Sweeper	Barber
	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)
Vellalar	1	7	1	2	18	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...
Chakkiliar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Naidu	...	2	...	...	15	...	1	...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...
Konar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pallan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gounder	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVI (contd.)

Occupational classifications of households

	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)
Asari	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parayan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Pandaram	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Maravar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
,, (Pattani)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	1	9	1	3	37	1	1	1	4	5	1	1	1	3	1

Table No. XVI (contd.)

Occupational classifications of households

Caste/ Community	Details of business (30)	Details of industry (31)	Details of other occupations (32)
Vellalar	Rice cake selling : 2 Betel nut shop : 4 Selling provision : 2 Fruit business : 1	Tailor : 2 Bee keeping : 19	
Chakkiliar	...	...	
Naidu	Provision stores : 1 Betel nut shop : 1	Bee keeping : 15	
Konar	...	...	
Valaiyar	...	Bee keeping : 2	
Nadar	...	Bee keeping : 1	
Pallan	...	...	
Naicker	...	Bee keeping : 2	
Gounder	...	...	
Chettiar	...	...	
Asari	...	Carpenter : 1	
Parayan	...	...	
Kuravar	...	...	
Pandaram	...	...	
Agamudaiyar	...	...	
Brahmin	...	...	
Oddar	...	...	
Pandithar	...	...	
Maravar	...	...	
Piramalaikallan	...	..	
Christian	...	Bee keeping : 2	
Muslim (Rowther	...	...	
,, (Pattani)	...	...	
Total	Rice cake selling : 2 Betel nut shop : 5 Selling provision : 3 Fruit business : 1	Tailor : 2 Carpenter : 1 Bee keeping : 41	Village Officials 2 Teacher 5 Watchman 17 Postal Runner 1 Shepherd 1 Pony rearing 1 Domestic servant 1 Plantation Maistry 1 Branch Postmaster and Homeopathic Doctor 1 Bee keeping Junior Fieldman 1 Temple Priest 1 Writer & clerk in Estate 1 General cooly 1 Sweeper 3 Barber 1

Table No. XVII

Trade or Business

Caste/ Community	Fruit selling			Provision store			Rice cake selling			Betel nut shop			Ready made shop		
	No. of house-holds	Source of finance	Average profit	No. of house-holds	Source of finance	Average profit	No. of house-holds	Source of finance	Average profit	No. of house-holds	Source of finance	Average profit	No. of house-holds	Source of finance	Average profit
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Vellalar	1	Business	Rs. 50	2	Business	Rs. 50	2	Business	Rs. 20	4	Business	Rs. 35	1	Business	Rs. 30
Naidu	...	...	...	1	„	Rs. 30	...	...	...	1	„	Rs. 30	...	...	...

*The other communities are not conducting any business.

N. B :—The income derived from business has been taken as profit.

Table No. XVIII

Workers classified by sex, age groups. industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

Caste/ Community	Age group	Total workers			Workers engaged in: Household Industry		Household Business		Household Cultivation		Others	
		*P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Vellalar	All ages	287	198	89	3	...	4	...	98	26	93	63
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	10—14	17	11	6	...	...	...	...	4	2	7	4
	15—19	55	37	18	...	...	...	...	11	10	26	8
	20—24	39	29	10	...	...	...	...	13	1	16	9
	25—29	32	25	7	1	...	...	...	13	...	11	7
	30—34	36	24	12	...	...	2	...	16	3	6	9
	35—44	55	39	16	2	...	...	...	21	4	16	12
	45—59	44	27	17	...	...	2	...	15	5	10	12
	60 & over	8	6	2	...	...	...	...	5	...	1	2

*P = Persons ; M = Males ; F = Females

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Chakkiliar	All ages	313	167	146	...	...	...	...	38	6	129	140
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	5	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3
	10—14	35	19	16	...	...	...	..	2	1	17	15
	15—19	37	23	14	...	...	...	...	4	...	19	14
	20—24	41	18	23	...	...	...	...	4	1	14	22
	25—29	48	21	27	...	...	...	...	3	1	18	26
	30—34	45	23	22	...	...	...	...	6	1	17	21
	35—44	62	39	23	...	...	...	...	12	...	27	23
	45—59	36	19	17	...	...	...	...	6	2	13	15
	60 & over	4	3	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	2	1
Naidu	All ages	167	117	50	...	...	1	...	73	17	43	33
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	4	3	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	1
	10—14	8	6	2	...	...	...	...	2	1	4	1
	15—19	26	15	11	...	...	...	...	8	5	7	6
	20—24	25	21	4	...	...	...	...	12	1	9	3
	25—29	17	15	2	...	...	...	...	9	...	6	2
	30—34	20	13	7	...	...	1	...	8	2	4	5
	35—44	26	13	13	...	...	...	...	10	4	3	9
	45—59	35	27	8	...	...	...	...	17	4	10	4
	60 & over	6	4	2	...	...	...	...	4	...	..	2

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Gounder	All ages	15	9	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	6
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	4	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
	15—19	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	25—29	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	35—44	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	45—59	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	All ages	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	30—34	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Brahmin	All ages	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pallan	All ages	19	12	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	7
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	15—19	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	25—29	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	30—34	5	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	4
	35—44	5	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	1
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Oddar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	All ages	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	..
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Pandaram	All ages	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	All ages	4	3	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	3	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Maravar	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalai-kallan	All ages	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Parayan	All ages	4	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	30—34	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	All ages	6	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
	30—34	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Nadar	All ages	23	13	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	13	10
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	5	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	2
	25—29	4	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
	30—34	7	4	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	3
	35—44	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
	45—59	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	All ages	22	17	5	...	...	...	...	6	1	11	4
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	10—14	4	2	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	2
	15—19	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	20—24	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	30—34	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	35—44	7	6	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	3	1
	45—59	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Konar	All ages	47	28	19	...	...	...	...	1	...	27	19
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
	15—19	11	7	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	4
	20—24	9	6	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	5	3
	25—29	6	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3
	30—34	5	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	2
	35—44	11	6	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	5
	45—59	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	All ages	13	8	5	...	...	...	...	4	...	4	5
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	15—19	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	1
	30—34	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1
	35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
	45—59	4	2	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	2
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Asari	All ages	3	2	1	1	...	...	...	..	...	1	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
	35—44	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	All ages	79	47	32	...	...	...	...	5	...	42	32
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	7	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	5
	15—19	8	5	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	3
	20—24	8	3	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	5
	25—29	11	8	3	...	...	...	...	2	...	6	3
	30—34	10	5	5	...	...	...	...	1	...	4	5
	35—44	21	11	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	11	10
	45—59	14	13	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	11	1
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Muslim (Rowther)	All ages	17	11	6	...	...	...	...	3	1	8	5
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	15—19	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	20—24	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	25—29	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	30—34	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
	35—44	6	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	All ages	8	6	2	...	...	...	...	6	2	...	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XVIII (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups, industry, business and cultivation belonging to the household

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Village Total	All ages	1,041	652	389	4	...	5	...	234	53	409	336
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...				...
	5 — 9	12	7	5	...	...	...	...	3	1	4	4
	10—14	83	45	37	...	...	...	...	9	5	37	32
	15—19	153	100	53	...	...	...	...	26	16	74	37
	20—24	136	84	52	...	...	...	...	31	4	53	48
	25—29	139	85	54	1	...	...	...	31	1	53	53
	30—34	145	82	63	...	...	3	...	33	6	46	57
	35—44	207	133	74	3	...	...	...	47	9	83	65
	45—59	147	101	46	...	...	2	...	43	11	56	35
	60 & over	19	14	5	...	...	...	...	11	...	3	5

A detailed account of the occupations pursued by the villagers given in Table No. XIX would give the reader a clear idea of the occupational structure of the village.

It could easily be seen that the workers depending on plantations including plantation cultivators, coolies etc., account for nearly 83·25 per cent of the total working force. Even among the rest, most of the salaried workers are employed as clerks, managers and labour supervisors etc., in the big estates in the village. Thus, the greatest majority of the working population in the village have to depend upon the plantations for eking out their livelihood. Among Palliyans, all the workers have been returned as agricultural labourers. They do mainly cooly work in plantations and rear small gardens of cereals near their houses. They have no land of their own and till the waste lands and the Government land near and around their temporary homesteads.

Table No. XIX

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/ Community	Age group	Plantation labourer			Plantation owner			Servant			Tailor			Village Officials		
		P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
Vellalar	All ages	150	88	62	124	98	26	2	1	1	3	3	...	1	1	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	10	6	4	6	4	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	34	26	8	21	11	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	25	16	9	14	13	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	17	10	7	13	13	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	1	...
	30—34	15	6	9	19	16	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	26	14	12	25	21	4	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...
	45—59	21	10	11	20	15	5	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 & over	2	...	2	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Caste/ Community	Age group	Business			Watchman			Rice cake selling			Casual labourer			Chakkiliar: Plantation labourer		
		P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
Vellalar—(contd.)	All ages	2	2	...	2	2	...	2	2	...	1	1	...	264	125	139
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	2	3
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	17	15
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33	19	14
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36	14	22
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	44	18	26
	30—34	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	38	17	21
	35—44	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47	25	22
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	26	11	15
	60 & over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	3	2	1

Table No. XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/ Community	Age group	Plantation manager			Sweeper			Watchman			Postal runner			Caste/ Community	Plantation owner or manager		
		P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.		P.	M.	F.
Chakkiliar—(contd.)	All ages	44	38	6	3	2	1	1	1	...	1	1	...	Naidu	90	73	17
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		3	3	...
	10—14	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		3	2	1
	15—19	4	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		13	8	5
	20—24	5	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		13	12	1
	25—29	4	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		9	9	...
	30—34	7	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		10	8	2
	35—44	12	12	...	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...		14	10	4
	45—59	8	6	2	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	1	...		21	17	4
	60 and over	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...		4	4	...

Caste/ Community	Age group	Plantation labourer			Domestic servant			Teacher			Editor			Postmaster		
		P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
Naidu—(contd.)	All ages	61	29	32	7	6	1	1	1	...	1	1	...	1	1	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	5	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	12	7	5	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	8	5	3	3	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	6	4	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	30—34	7	2	5	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	35—44	10	1	9	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	45—59	10	6	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 and over	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/Community	Naidu—(contd.)									Gounder			Agamudaiyar		
	Watchman			Business			Maistry in coffee estate			Plantation labourer			Plantation labourer		
Age group	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
All ages	4	4	...	1	1	...	1	1	...	15	9	6	3	1	2
0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2	2	...	...	...
15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3	...	...	...	...
20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	1	...	1
30—34	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	...
35—44	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	...	...	...
45—59	3	3	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	2	2	...	1	...	1
60 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Caste/Community	Brahmin			Pallar						Oddar			Pandithar		
	Teacher			Plantation labourer			Watchman			Plantation labourer			Barber		
Age group	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
All ages	1	1	...	17	10	7	2	2	...	2	1	1	1	1	...
0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—14	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—19	...	...	...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
20—24	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25—29	1	1	...	2	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
30—34	...	...	...	5	1	4	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
35—44	...	...	...	4	3	1	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
45—59	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
60 and over	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/ Community	Age group	Pandaram: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Pandaram: Koil poosari P.	M.	F.	Kuravar: Sweeper P.	M.	F.	Kuravar: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Kuravar: Pony rearing P.	M.	F.
	All ages	2	1	1	1	1	...	2	2	...	1	...	1	1	1	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
	60 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Age group	Maravar: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Piramalaikallan: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Parayan: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Chettiar: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.	Nadar: Plantation labourer P.	M.	F.
All ages	2	1	1	2	1	1	4	3	1	6	3	3	21	11	10
0 — 4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5 — 9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	2	1	1
15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2	2
25—29	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	3	1	2	4	...	4
30—34	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	...	3	2	1	7	4	3
35—44	1	1	...	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	3	...
45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
60 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/Community	Age group	Clerk P.	Clerk M.	Clerk F.	Writer in coffee estate P.	Writer in coffee estate M.	Writer in coffee estate F.	Caste/Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.	Shepherd P.	Shepherd M.	Shepherd F.
Nadar—(contd.)	All ages	1	1	...	1	1	...	Valaiyar	13	9	4	7	6	1	1	1	...
	0—4	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5—9	...	...	...	...	..	...		1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...		3	1	2	1	1	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	...
	20—24	1	1	...	...	...	...		3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	...	...	...		3	2	1	3	3	...	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	1	1	...		1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
	60 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Caste/Community	Age group	Watchman P.	Watchman M.	Watchman F.	Caste/Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Watchman P.	Watchman M.	Watchman F.	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.	Caste/Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.
Valaiyar—(contd.)	All ages	1	1	...	Konar	43	24	19	3	3	...	1	1	...	Naicker	9	4	5
	0—4	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...
	5—9	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...		2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	1	...
	15—19	...	...	...		11	7	4	...	...	...	...	...	...		1	...	1
	20—24	...	...	...		8	5	3	...	...	...	1	1	...		...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...		5	2	3	1	1	...	...	...	...		1	...	1
	30—34	...	...	...		5	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...		2	1	1
	35—44	1	1	...		10	5	5	1	1	...	...	...	...		1	1	...
	45—59	...	...	...		2	2	...	1	1	...	...	...	...		3	1	2
	60 and over	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...

Table No. XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/ Community	Age group	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.	Caste/ Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Carpenter P.	Carpenter M.	Carpenter F.	Caste/ Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.
Naicker—(contd.)	All ages	4	4	...	Asari	2	1	1	1	1	...	Muslim (Rowther)	11	6	5	4	3	1
	0 — 4	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	...	1
	15—19	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		3	2	1	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	1	...
	25—29	2	2	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	1	...
	30—34	1	1	...		2	1	1	...	...	...		2	...	2	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	1	...		6	4	2	...	...	...
	45—59	1	1	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
	60 and over	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	1	1	...

Caste/ Community	Age group	Teacher P.	Teacher M.	Teacher F.	Caste/ Community	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Caste/ Community	Plantation labourer P.	Plantation labourer M.	Plantation labourer F.	Plantation manager P.	Plantation manager M.	Plantation manager F.
Muslim (Rowther)—(contd.)	All ages	2	2	...	Muslim (Pattani)	6	4	2	2	2	..	Christian	67	36	31	5	5	...
	0 — 4	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 — 9	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		7	2	5	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...		3	3	...	...	...	...		8	5	3	...	...	...
	20—24	1	1	...		1	...	1	...	...	...		8	3	5	...	...	...
	25—29	1	1	...		...	...	...	1	1	...		9	6	3	2	2	...
	30—34	...	...	...		1	...	1	1	1	...		8	3	5	1	1	...
	35—44	...	...	...		1	1	...	...	...	...		19	10	9	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		8	7	1	2	2	...
	60 and over	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No: XIX (contd.)

Workers classified by sex, age groups and occupation

Caste/ Community	Age group	Farm manager			Maistry in coffee estate			Teacher			Watchman		
		P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
Christian—(contd.)	All ages	1	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	4	4	...
	0—4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5—9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	10—14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	15—19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	20—24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	25—29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30—34	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	35—44	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
	45—59	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	...
	60 and over	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Caste and occupation

121. Caste determines in a very large measure the occupation to be pursued by an individual and tradition has assigned certain occupations to certain communities for e.g., the Pandarams are the traditional priestly caste employed in temples. Occupations like carpentry and blacksmithy are the traditional pursuits of the Kammalars. The Oddans are expert earth workers engaged in well digging and house construction. The menial jobs like scavenging, street sweeping, removing of dead cattle, burying the dead corpse etc., are undertaken by the Scheduled Castes. The washing of clothes and the dressing of hair are the traditional occupations of the communities of Dhoby and Barber respectively. The Pallans and Parayans are the traditional agricultural serfs or drudges employed by big cultivators to attend to work in the fields.

Occupational mobility

122. Now-a-days not much of adherence to these traditional occupations is noticed. The tendency to stick to one's own traditional occupation is steadily on the decrease. Among Chakkilians, the traditional leather workers and menials, only three are employed as sweepers. Others have been returned during our survey as plantation workers. One of them is working as a mail runner. Some Chakkiliya households have acquired small pieces of lands and have proudly reported themselves as plantation owners. Among Pandarams, the traditional priestly caste, only one is employed as a temple poosari while two persons have been returned as plantation workers. The Konars are traditional shepherds, but in Sirumalai, they are employed as plantation labourers and watchmen. None of them has been reported to be pursuing their traditional occupation of sheep-rearing or cattle-tending. Among Asaris or Kammalars, only one is employed in the traditional occupation of carpentry while two others have been returned as plantation labourers.

Land resources

123. The village has an area of 26,420·13 acres, out of which the total cultivable area comes to 6,853.37 acres, i.e., 25·9%. The Sirumalai plateau on which the village is situated and the western slopes of the hill which formerly belonged to the Zamindar of Ammananayakkanur were taken over by the State Government in the year 1951 under the Madras Estates Abolition Act, 1948. The survey of lands has been completed recently and the settlement of revenue accounts is under way and the issue of ryotwari pattas to the cultivators is now going on.

Land utilisation statistics

124. The land utilisation statistics of the village, together with area under principal crops during the previous decades are as follows :

	Extent. (Acres)	Percentage.
Total cultivable area	6,853·37	25.9
Forests	295·00	1·1
Poramboke	96·63	0·4
Total unassessed waste	19,175·13	72·6
Total area	26,420·13	100·00

Land assets

125. A study of land and cattle assets of a farmer reveals his true economic position. This is true for Sirumalai village also. Barring a few estate owners, most of the peasant proprietors possess only small holdings, scarcely sufficient to support their families. Their bits of land are scattered here and there. They live upto the motto 'once in agriculture, always in agriculture.' The peasants have a passive attitude to life, they have an enormous capacity to endure poverty and they are ready to live at the lowest standard of existence and they lack education and enterprise. These are, perhaps, the factors that contribute to this state of affairs. The average size of the holdings of the peasantry is not only too small for profitable cultivation, but it is also broken up into small fragments. The holding of five acres may sometimes consist of ten or more strips scattered over various slopes of the hill. This results in high cost of cultivation, unnecessary waste of time and labour and several other disadvantages. Due to the present law of inheritance, the landed property is equally shared among the sons and when this process goes on from generation to generation, it results in successive subdivisions of the holding, ultimately reducing them to very uneconomic and insufficient sizes. The extent of land possessed by different communities and the classification of lands etc., are given in the Table No. XX.

Table No. XX

Possession of land

Caste/ Community	Total No. of households	No. of households having no land	Name of interest on land	Number of households and extent of land								
				5 cents & below	6-10 cents	11-20 cents	21-50 cents	51 cents to 1 acre	1·01-2·49 acres	2·50-4·99 acres	5 to 9·99 acres	10 and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Vellalar	124	42	Land owned	...	...	...	1	2	12	16	18	33
Chakkiliar	102	59	"	...	...	...	1	...	27	5	6	4
Naidu	76	20	"	...	...	2	...	1	6	12	21	14
Konar	47	16	"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Valaiyar	13	4	"	...	...	...	...	...	3	3	2	1
Nadar	11	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	6	4	Land owned	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Gounder	4	4	"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XX (contd.)

Possession of land

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Parayan	2	1	Land owned	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	Land owned	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Maravar	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalai-kallan	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	28	Land owned	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	2
Muslim (Rowther)	7	6	„	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Muslim (Pattani)	2	...	„	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Total	418	216	...	...	1	2	2	3	49	38	50	57

Prima facie, this may lead to the conclusion that the lands are fairly medium sized. But it is to be remembered that the holdings in hill tracts involve more waste of land, consequent on the nature of the terrain and due to the fact of undulations. An average economic holding in Sirumalai will be bigger in extent than an economic holding in Tanjore delta. The economic holding depends on the nature of the soil, kind of crops, type of farming, technique of cultivation, agricultural wage level, means of transport and similar factors. A cultivator owning about ten acres or so in Sirumalai hardly finds it easy to keep his level of income above subsistence. In Sirumalai, 70% of the holdings fall below ten acres. The fact remains that these middle class land owners have no opportunity to augment their income by any other means with the result that pressure on soil goes on increasing and the size of holding decreasing. They have no subsidiary occupation whatsoever to supplement their incomes. Bee-keeping industry may perhaps be promoted here usefully as one of the subsidiary occupations. With this in view, the All India Khadi and village Industries Board has taken efforts to promote Honey production in Sirumalai Hills and 250 bee-hives have been distributed among the peasants at one-fourth of the actual cost. There is a proposal to establish a Bee Nursery at Sirumalai and rear and supply bee colonies to Apiarists and a set of decoy hives in forest areas of the hills to collect wild swarms and honey. Despite the impetus given by the Government, only 45 households have bee-hives at their houses.

Estates

126. There are three big estates in the village which come under the Labour Act and St. Joseph's Estate is the biggest of them. Among other big estates, one belongs to a well-to-do Muslim of Dindigul and another to a local man of the village. The St. Joseph's Estate which has an extent of 700 acres lies at an elevation of 3,100′ to 3,900′. The estate employs hundreds of coolies drawn from various villages in the plains and from the village of Sirumalai itself. Many of these labourers stay in the estate itself and the estate management has provided them with living quarters. The estate was originally owned by some European, Messrs. Elliot who pioneered the coffee plantations in Sirumalai. He obtained the seeds from Mysore and established the plantations. Later on, the Jesuit Fathers of Roman Catholic Mission bought the estate from its European owner. Now as has been stated already, it is owned by a Nadar family from Pattiveeranpatti village which is nearly 30 miles away from Sirumalai. Coffee and plantains are grown over large extent here while cardamom is cultivated on a small area. Oranges are also grown, but not on any considerable scale. The estate owns a Pulper Factory for its own use and for the use of other coffee growers.

Crop pattern

127. Coffee and plantains are the important plantation crops in the village. Besides, there are a few orchards of oranges and limes. The exploitation of the area for raising various crops at different Fasli years is shown in the statement below :

Fasli year	Area under different crops (in acres)					
	Coffee	Plantation	Lemon and Orange	Ragi	Miscellaneous cardamom and others	Total area sown
1361	994·87	862·73	397·16	49·90	4·11	2,308·77
1362	995·50	835·29	402·23	21·54	3·67	2,258·23
1363	995·59	835·29	462·14	97·13	3·67	2,333·82
1364	995·59	835·29	402·14	28·50	3·67	2,265·19
1365	995·59	864·58	402·14	25·60	4·41	2,292·32
1366	995·59	886·93	409·96	...	4·41	2,296·89
1367	995·59	909.61	515·27	27·25	6·30	2,354·02
1368	1,045·14	1,008·21	427·43	20·90	6·75	2,508·43
1369	1,045·14	1,008·21	436·12	54·30	7·05	2,550·82

A view of St. Joseph's Coffee Estate.

A coffee plant ready for picking.

Fruits of hard Labour
Coffee fruits are picked by coolies in Joseph's Coffee Estate.

A study of the table reveals that coffee occupies 41% of the total area sown and the extent under coffee cultivation has increased from 994·87 acres in Fasli 1361 (1951-1952) to 1,045.14 acres in Fasli 1369 (1959-1960). The area under plantain cultivation has also increased to a considerable extent, i.e., from 862.73 acres in Fasli 1361 to 1,008.21 acres in Fasli 1369. However, during the intermediary Fasli years 1362-1364, plantain cultivation had been limited to 835·29 acres only. The extent under lemon and orange cultivation is comparatively low, being 18% of the total area sown. Nevertheless, the increase in its cultivation deserves mention. There is still scope for further expansion and development, as a vast extent of land is still left unutilised. Efforts have also been made in this direction under the scheme 'Loan for extending Sirumalai plantain fruits cultivation' which was undertaken under the Second Five Year Plan. Let us now study in detail the agricultural practices in Sirumalai.

Coffee

128. Two important species of coffee grown in Sirumalai are 'Coffea Arabica' and 'Coffea Robusta'. Arabica is the more popular species than Robusta and is grown on a far larger scale. The Robusta variety is hardier and grown at lower elevations and is less affected by leaf diseases.

The coffee plant which thrives best in cold climate at an altitude of 2,500′ to 5,000′ grows well in Sirumalai where the soil is humus and the rainfall sufficient and well distributed throughout the year. The temperature is also mild and highly suitable for coffee. Even in summer, the highest temperature is mitigated to a great extent by the vast canopy of shade thrown over the plants by the lofty silver oaks. The soil is lateritic, dark red and loamy for the major part. Of course, it is mixed with gravel in some parts too. Moreover, Sirumalai being a hilly village with an exuberance of all manner of vegetation, the soil is usually covered with deep layers of leaf which through the years, is converted into natural manure. The great fertility of the soil is due to this process.

Raising of the plantations

129. In raising coffee plantation, the first step is the clearing of the wood except, of course, the tall trees which provide shade. From our discussion with the large planters of St. Joseph's Estate, it is gathered that such felling of trees and culturing the ground costs from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 per acre. In higher slopes, where the woods are thick, these clearing charges are naturally high. In slopes where trees are sparse and scattered, plantation includes the planting of shade trees, especially silver oak (*Grevika robusta*) and coral tree (*Erythrina indica*). The latter species is often used as temporary shade and is replaced by silver oak trees. This preliminary preparation of planting shade trees is done one year ahead of planting the coffee species.

The coffee seedlings for planting are raised in nurseries. Generally the villagers get top quality seeds which are supplied by the Coffee Board. The seeds are sown in the nursery bed and the plants are carefully looked after till they grow to a height of 6". Water is usually sprayed with a spray bucket. Above the seed bed, a temporary shed is put up, usually a pandhal, made of leaves. And the bed is also covered with dried leaves, so that the water that is poured will be filtered down in moderate quantity. In about six or seven weeks after sowing, young plants sprout out which are then transplanted, each in a small basket made for the purpose or polythene bags, stuffed with manure which is usually a sumptuous quantity of soil taken from the side of a jack tree, the remainder being vegetable and rubbish manure. The seedlings are watered twice a day continuously for three months. Afterwards, these are transferred to the pits in the plantation which are their permanent location. The usual size of a pit is 18″ square and 12 to 24″ deep. The distance between the plants depends on the species of coffee that is planted. In case of Arabica, the plants are planted at an interval of 6′ and in case of Robusta, at an interval of 9′ to 10′.

During the infant stage, a coffee plant needs a lot of attention. Digging around the stem and turning the soil and also weeding are necessary operations. Weeding is done until the plant takes a dense growth. Digging and inter-culturing at the root is done annually or once in every two years and care is taken not to interfere with the feeding roots. Every year, the dead and the diseased plants are replaced. About six months after transplanting, the plants grow to a height of 2′ with a main shoot and four or five primary branches. The main shoot at this stage is pruned to the level of other primary branches, to enable fresh off-shoot from the main branches. Care is taken in pruning because heavy pruning results in

moderate yield, but the yield is annual while light pruning results in a heavy yield in every alternate year. The planters usually prefer heavy pruning since that ensures them sufficient coffee produce every year.

The coffee plants begin to bear fruit three years after planting. But a good bearing capacity is noticed from its fifth year onwards. The plants outlast even forty or fifty years, sometimes even longer, but the yield progressively decreases with the passage of years.

The coffee plants begin blooming after a shower they receive in April. There are three flowerings every year and the flowers are snow-white. When the plants are laden with flowers in an estate, the sight is a magnificent one, and the perfume that is emanated goes to the head. It would be extremely advantageous if there are no rains when the plants are blooming. Otherwise the rains blow away the blossoms and the yield falls. The fruits *berries* become ripe and are ready for picking from November onwards. After picking operations are over, plants are pruned again. By pulping the berries, the planters get parchment coffee. There are eleven pulping machines in the village. Two of them are power-operated while the other nine are hand-operated Pulping is the removal of the sweet fleshy covering of the fruit. The St. Joseph's Estate owns a power driven pulper factory where pulping is done on a large scale. For selling out the fruits in pulpers, the planters pay Re. 1 per every Kalam or 48 Madras measures. Some of the poor households do the skinning of the fruits by some crude methods. The fruits are first dried and the skin is removed by trampling them under foot and by gently pounding them in mortars.

A well managed estate of Arabica coffee yields from 250 to 350 lbs. per acre and Robusta yields on an average about 450 lbs. In Sirumalai, only big estates like St. Joseph's Estate have reached such maximum yield per acre. In other small plantations the yield varies between 100 and 200 lbs under either species. The yields also vary from year to year, especially in the case of plants that bear in alternate years. The yield greatly depends also on the care and management of the plantation such as manuring, timely pruning etc. Most of the small plantation owners are not financially sound enough to embark on preventive measures against pests and diseases. From our survey, it is understood that only in St. Joseph's Estate and other big estates of well-to-do cultivators, preventive measures are taken against pests and diseases.

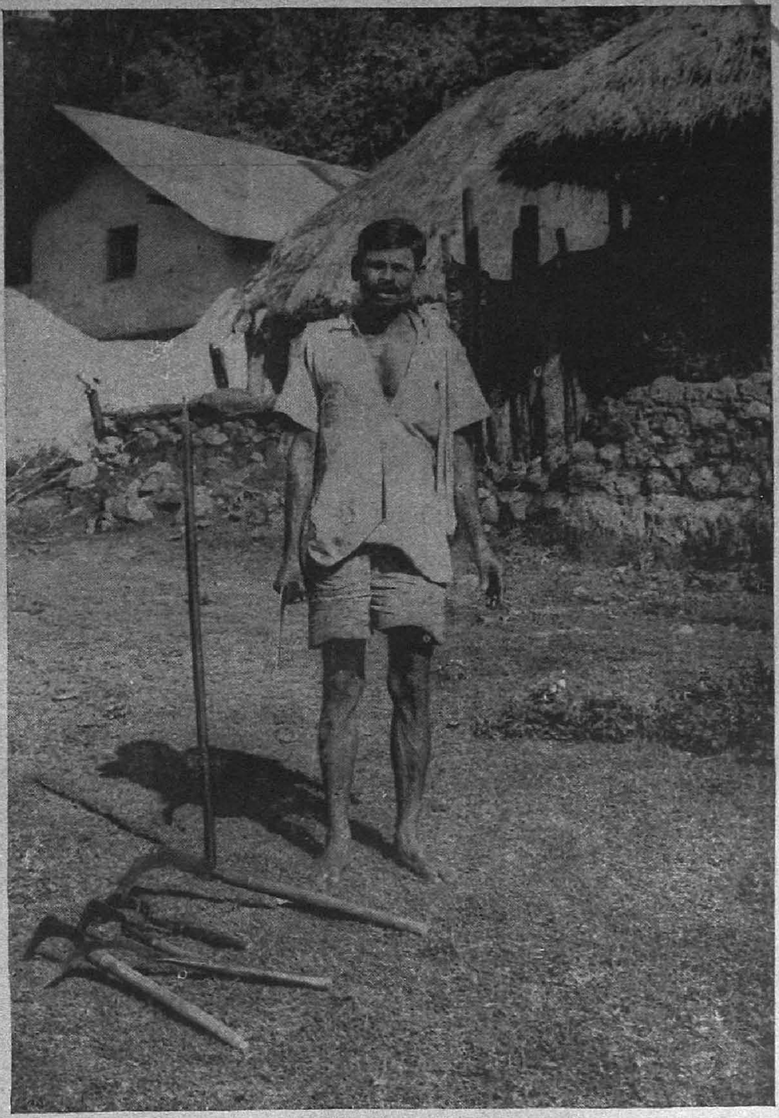
Plantains

130. Plantains of Sirumalai are famous for their delicious sweetness and special taste. They form a class by themselves and are in great demand everywhere, particularly in Madurai district and districts adjoining Madurai. Next to coffee, it is cultivated over a large extent and as much as 39·53% of the total land is used for plantain cultivation. Unlike plantains in the plains, plantain in Sirumalai is a perennial crop In the plains, the yield of plantain trees progressively lessens from year to year and after five years, the produce is almost nil. That is why every five years plantain trees in the plains are destroyed and replanting is taken up. But in Sirumalai, they continue to prosper and bear fruit for about fifty years or more.

Before raising plantain crop, the ground is well prepared by deep ploughing and the weeds and bushes are cleared. Manure application is not very much necessary though it would be positively good. Usually the soil under the jack tree is used as manure and this very much improves the quality of the soil and makes it particularly agreeable to plantain cultivation. Some of the planters apply farmyard manure to a limited extent. Planting is done from June to August. Two months old suckers with a height of about 1′ are used for planting. Generally the suckers which have tender leaves rolled into sword-like formations are preferred to broad-leafed suckers. For every single sucker, a separate pit is dug. When the tree grows to a height of 10′, the side branches are cut. Care is also taken to cut the unnecessary extra suckers at the root. After yielding one bunch, the stalk dies and a new sucker at the root takes its place and when it dies after yielding a bunch in its turn, another sucker at the root takes its place in turn and this succession continues for a time.

Varieties of plantains

131. The important varieties of plantains grown in Sirumalai are Malaivazhai, Namarai, Red Fruit, Nei Vazhai. Apart from these popular varieties, other varieties are also grown and they are: Poovan, Uthiram, Panai, Montham, Poovila Sundai and Pachai Nadan. Of late, some of the planters are trying the Nenthiram fruit, the popular species in Kerala which is almost exclusive to that region. The plantain fruits of Sirumalai are usually divided into two grades



A plantation worker with his implements.

The Pulper factory at the St. Joseph's Coffee Estate.

according to their size and quality. The first grade is sold at the rate of Rs. 30 to 35 per Pothi, a standard bundle of 500 fruits. The second grade is usually sold at the rate of Rs. 12 to 18 per Pothi of 600 fruits. The villagers also sow ragi in the plantain gardens during the Tamil month of Avani, corresponding to July-August and harvest it in the month of Thai, corresponding to January-February. The stubbles left after reaping is considered a good natural manure for the plantain crop. Apart from these, no manure is normally applied to the plantain gardens.

Citrus fruits

The lime and orange are the citrus fruits that are grown in this village. Next to coffee and plantains, these two are grown on the largest scale and they occupy quite a large portion of the cultivable land in the village. These form the third largest plantation in Sirumalai. The 'Vellodu' variety of lemon is the tree type and it is this type that is largely grown in the plantation scale. In some of the plantations, the creeper variety is also tried now-a-days and it is said to be promising. The lime seedlings are bought from village Vellodu which is near Dindigul. The seedlings cost Rs. 5 per 100. These are transplanted during the monsoon season. The spacing between each pair of plants varies from 10 to 20′ depending upon the variety. The oranges grown in the village are the usual popular species known as 'loose jackets'. The money income from the citrus fruits does not appear to be very considerable.

Cardamom

132. The cardamom cultivation in the village is not worth speaking of. The extent over which it is grown is indeed negligible. Just about 4 to 5 acres alone are under cardamom cultivation. This small extent is distributed among two or three estates. For its growth, cardamom requires plentiful and well distributed rainfall ranging from 60 to more than 100″. The altitude has to be necessarily between 2,500′- 5,000′. and a temperature between 60° to 95°F. Shade is an important requisite and cardamom thrives well in the ravines of evergreen forests that have a thick layer of leafy mould. There should be abundant moisture in the soil, but no water-logging. The soils that are most suited to cardamom crop are red, lateritic, and loams which are strongly aciditic. If cardamon is grown in Sirumalai as a power crop on a plantation scale, it is likely to be successful and paying crop. But for some reason or other, the planters are not giving serious thought to it. Generally two methods are adopted for propagating cardamom, viz: (1) raising seedlings in nurseries and transplanting them and (2) separating the rhizomes from a large clump into individual rhizomes for planting as separate plants. Propagation by rhizomes ensures uniformity of the crop. But in Sirumalai, only the first method is adopted. The seedlings are raised in seed beds measuring 15′ × 2′ which are protected by roof thatching 3′ to 5′ high to provide shade. The 'Idavalai' grass is also laid over the seed bed. The seeds are carefully located, smeared with ash and rubbed together in hands to separate the seeds from each other. Then they are dried in the sun. Since cardamom seeds lose their viability very rapidly, they should be sown as soon as possible after collecting them. Sowing is done from September to October. Seedlings emerge from the seed-bed about eight weeks after planting and when they are six months old, they are transferred to another well-manured bed in which they are spaced 10″ apart. Half a pound of seed provides sufficient seedlings for an acre. Planting at the final site is done after the first showers in April to June in pits 18″ square, 1′ deep and spaced 5′-6′ apart.

Planted seedlings are tied to stakes to prevent their being broken or blown down by strong wind. The stakes are removed when the seedlings are established, otherwise the stakes will be attacked by white ants (Termites).

It is also given periodical cultural operations such as weeding, thinning the shade trees, inter-culture, filling in gaps, manure application and cleaning the ground around flower spikes. Cardamom plants begin to bear fruits from the third year after transplanting and come to full bearing capacity in the seventh year. The flowering spikes develop from the space of the stems of previous year growth and are thin and long, growing erect or lying flat on the ground. Flowering shoots begin to appear from January and the actual flowering in April-May. Fruits develop four months after flowering. Picking is a laborious process and continues from September to January. Ripe fruits alone are carefully detached from the inflorescence. The clumps have to be visited every week or ten days to gather the fruits.

Improvement

133. The Indian Coffee Board has launched a new scheme called the Intensive Extension Service. This scheme has been extended to Sirumalai also. This is

trying to wean away the planters from old primitive methods of cultivation and introduce them to scientific methods. It is making consistent and persistent efforts in this behalf, and its efforts have been attended with a fair measure of success. It has brought under scientific cultivation a good number of coffee estates. It is generally believed that in Sirumalai coffee cultivation has reached the utmost limit of expansion and if the area under coffee is to be further expanded, it would be only at the cost of plantain gardens. The only course open to the planters for augmenting the production of coffee is to improve the methods of coffee cultivation and thereby step up the output per acre. Research studies under the titles *Reorientation Blocks* and *Demonstration Plots* which have been introduced in the village recently by the Coffee Board have brought home to the local cultivators the vital importance of modern cultural practices and improved methods. Of late, coffee planters in Sirumalai approach the Office of the Indian Coffee Board located in Dindigul for getting improved strains of coffee seeds, manures, insecticides etc. It is learnt that the number of coffee planters, that contact the Coffee Board Office is steadily and markedly increasing. The spraying of insecticides is more and more resorted to by a growing number of cultivators. In this connection, we cannot help mentioning the pioneering work done by the St. Joseph's Estate. It is claimed by the Coffee Board that the intensive and sustained efforts it made to introduce scientific methods in Sirumalai hills have yielded notable results, in that it has brought a vast acreage under scientific methods and that the yield per acre also has increased from 1¼ cwts. to 5 cwts.

We are not able to record any noticeable improvement in plantain cultivation. However, under the Community Development Programme, two *Demonstration Plots* are proposed to be established here.

Table No. XXI

Households and development activities

No. of households which have during the last five years

Community	Total No. of households	Secured							Derived benefit			Participated in	
		Better irrigation facilities	Better types of cattle	Better seeds	Better implements	Better manure	More land for cultivation	Use of pesticides	Improved method of cultivation like Japanese cultivation	Land improvement measures like reclamation, conservation and consolidation	National Extension Service or Community Project having one pulping	Received demonstration improved agricultural practics	In activities works of Community Project by contribution Land, Labour, Cash or Materials
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Vellalar	124	...	...	16	1	19	4	8	...	...	...	...	...
Chakkiliar	102	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naidu	76	...	1	12	3	22	4	17	...	...	1	...	...
Konar	17	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	13	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nadar	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. (contd.) XXI

Households and development activities

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Naicker	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gounder	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parayan	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piramalai-kallan	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	418	...	1	28	5	41	8	25	...	...	1	...	...

Speaking generally, the ray of modern knowledge is only slowly penetrating into the village. The enthusiasm of the villagers for adopting scientific methods has still to be whipped up. There are many people in the village still not conscious of the various developmental programmes. Among the 418 households, only forty-one have used scientific manure, twenty-eight have used improved strains of seeds, twenty-five used scientific pesticides, five have obtained new implements, and eight have done land improvement on modern lines and only one has purchased improved breed of cattle. From the Community Development Programmes, only one household has derived any benefit worth the name. This shows the lethargic attitude of the farmers and lack of serious and earnest publicity on the part of the officialdom.

Pests and pesticides (coffee)

134. The Arabica plants are often attacked by a moth (*Cyclotrigus quatrifus*) which affects the stems of the plant and the branches. The leaves of the affected plant gradually become pale and ultimately wither out. The removal of the moth in its advanced stage is highly impossible. However, it can be prevented at the egg or pupa stage. The Coffee Board has recommended the use of Pensin Hero Chloride or Dieltrin. The eel worms are the other type of pests often affecting the coffee plants. The worm saps the energy of the plant by attacking the roots themselves. Usually plants aged one to five years are affected by these worms. When affected, the plant loses its green foliage and the branches begin to wither. The roots and stem shrink and the plant has a feeble, dry and drooping appearance. Fumigation is one of the preventive measures. But once affected, the plant very rarely resumes its vitality and often succumbs to the attack and decays. The best that can be done is to prevent its spreading to the other plants. The Root Mealy Bug (*Prendococous citrimiss*) is another pest which mostly occurs on young plants upto five years old though they infest the major plants also at times. The curious thing about it is that it spreads sometimes from nursery itself. So its elimination from the nursery stage is very important. The point to be noted is that these Mealy Bugs, as the name indicates, affect the root itself. They are oviparious and the nymphs hatched out of eggs are fairly active and crawl about to find spots suitable for feeding. The plant infested by Mealy Bugs look sickly and weakened as the insects puncture the corytical regions of roots and extract nourishment from them. This injury appears to stimulate the growth of spongy cellar tissues in roots. The presence of large number of bugs on the root system is a tax on the plant's nutrition and may lead to unthrifty bushes. Inhalation of fumes, dusting of D. D. T. or P. H. C. and applications of Ekatox 20 W. P. one lb. in 100 gallons, Folidol E. 605, 6 to 10 oz. in 100 gallons or H.E.T.P. one lb. in 80 gallons of water to the soil around the plants will be good.

The other minor insects are the shoot Mealy Bug, the Red borer, cut worms, leaf cutting caterpillars and the hairy caterpillars. The Coffee Board enlightens the planters on the control measures against these pests and diseases, but only a few planters have adopted these methods. It is understood from our survey that only twenty-five households have so far used scientific pesticides.

Implements

135. The agricultural implements are of the old type and pattern which have been in use for centuries. Adoption of improved implements is gaining ground, but only very slowly. Recently some of the coffee growers have begun to use sprayers and dusters to treat the coffee plants with insecticides and the Block Development Organisation is also granting subsidies to the cultivators for purchasing these implements. Except the sprayers, all the other types of implements that are in use in Sirumalai are the time-honoured ones. Axe, crowbar, manvetti, kontharuval, and bill-hook are the common implements, and ploughs are rare. The implements in general are well adapted to the local conditions. They are cheap, easily made, and what is perhaps of more importance, easily repaired. Normally implements like axe, bill-hook, and crowbars are owned by cooly workers. In some cases the cultivators who engage coolies supply them for the duration of the work. The statement below shows the various types of implements and the average number of implements possessed by the cultivating families and labour class in Sirumalai.

Owner Cultivators

Type of implements	Total number of families : 178		
	No. of families possessing the implements	percentage	Average No. per family
1. Axe	98	58	2
2. Crowbar	159	89	3
3. Manvetti	167	94	10
4. Bill-hook	37	21	2

Agricultural labourers

Type of implements	No. of families possessing the implements	Percentage	Average No. per family
1. Crowbar	10	5	2
2. Manvetti	13	7	3
3. Sickle	24	12	2

Marketing

136. There are no suitable marketing facilities or organizations in the village and this very much comes in the way of profitable marketing of the agricultural produce. The Indian Coffee Board is, of course, the sole marketing agency for coffee. They procure the produce from the coffee growers, leaving a small margin to them for domestic consumption. The growers sell their coffee mostly in parchment at the rate of Rs. 30 to 40 per bushel.

Regarding the marketing of plantains, the position is far from satisfactory and particularly the small cultivators are put to a variety of difficulties in marketing their produce. They are obliged to take the plantains to the market in Dindigul which meets every Monday in which they dispose of their produce and with the money they get, they purchase their household provisions and other communities. The middlemen play a considerable role in these transactions. Often the consumer pays much, but the producer gets little and these middlemen appropriate a sizable margin of profit. The factors that contribute to this sorry state of affairs are inadequate means of transport, absence of standardisation of produce, lack of knowledge of the marketing conditions and trends on the part of the producer, the perishable nature of the goods and the extreme individualism of the ryot which prevents him from entering into a co-operative arrangement with his fellow-producers for the better marketing of the goods. Most of these cultivators are illiterate with a tendency to take things as they are. They often lament over the various hurdles and difficulties that beset their way towards progress and prosperity, but they are incapable of spontaneous efforts to ameliorate their conditions. But they have plenty of native intelligence and if somebody takes the lead to organise them and speed up efforts in this direction, very fruitful results can be easily seen. The cultivators are certainly not satisfied with the present system of selling their produce, and they feel the imperative need for something like a sale society for themselves. The two

Plantation implements

Co-operative Societies in the village are only Co-operative Credit Societies. One of the societies may enlarge itself and take up the marketing of their plantain fruits.

An important pre-requisite for the efficient and profitable marketing of any goods is cheep transport which is, however, conspicuously absent in Sirumalai. The hopeless condition of the present mud road and the amount of inconvenience it costs to the vehicular and pedestrian traffic has already been touched upon. The cost of transport of these plantains from Sirumalai to Dindigul is naturally very high. The plantain bunches have to be carried first from the gardens in the distant hill slopes to the village proper (i.e., Sirumalai village) and then to the market in Dindigul or to the shandy at Enakkalapuram. The only available means of transport from Sirumalai are horses and country carts and sometimes the fruits are transported by head-loads and of late, some private motor vans are plying, but their charges seem to be exorbitant. Large scale transport through lorries is not possible due to the extremely defective condition of the ghat road. Under the present circumstances, the transport of plantains through lorries is an extremely unprofitable proposition. Provision of better communication facilities will go a long way in helping the cultivators to market their goods profitably.

Provision of storage facilities also will be of great help to the plantain growers. The construction of at least a country-type warehouse can be usefully thought of.

Plantation cost

137. The statement of cost of cultivation of a basic unit of land, viz., one acre is given below :

Coffee Plantation

Items of expenditure.

	Rs.
Clearing of forest	1,000
Bund formation	500
Culturing the soil	50
Manure	400
Seed	25
Nursery expenses	50
Transplanting	40
Picking	300
Total	2,365

Establishment of coffee

138. Establishing a coffee plantation is often expensive. But as has been said in the foregoing pages, coffee yields for more than 50 years. So it is profitable in the long run. Annual yield from an acre amounts to 50 to 60 bushes and the net income in rupee value amounts to Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500. Coffee yields a bumper crop once in three or four years and the next year's yield after a bumper crop is usually low or moderate.

Cost of cultivation—Plantains

(Per acre)

	Rs.
Clearing the forest	1,000
Bund formation	500
Planting	20
Weeding	45
Total	1,565

The annual income from a garden amounts to Rs. 400 per acre and as many as 20 ratoon crops are harvested from a plantain garden. In some regions like Durgai Amman Koil, Thappukadu areas, a plantain garden yields as many as 50 ratoon crops.

Cattle wealth

139. It goes without saying that bulls and oxen are rarely found here since the necessity for ploughing scarcely arises, except perhaps on rare occasions for reclaiming the waste land for the first time. Our survey reveals that only six households own bulls numbering thirteen. Most of these are draught bulls. Horse is the most common animal that is found in the village and it is used for transporting the agricultural produce. On the whole, 88 households own 175 horses in the village. These horses are just load carriers and do not belong to any superior pedigree and consequently they cannot be used for any long riding purposes. They are just beasts of burden. Cows and goats are found in a considerable number and they are the main source of milk. Buffaloes and sheep are wholly absent. The cattle wealth as found during our survey, is given in the Table No. XXIII.

Table No. XXII

Quantum of agricultural produce

Caste/ Community	Total No. of households engaged in agriculture	Number of households self-sufficient in foodgrains	Number of households with surplus produce	Number of households with deficit
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Vellalar	79	...	79	...
Chakkiliar	34	...	34	...
Naidu	56	...	56	...
Konar	1	...	1	...
Valaiyar	9	...	9	...
Nadar	...	...	...	...
Pallan	...	...	...	...
Naicker	2	...	2	...
Gounder	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	...	...	...	...
Asari	...	...	...	...
Parayan	1	...	1	...
Kuravar	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	...	...	...	
Brahmin	...	...	...	...
Oddar	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	...	...	...	...
Maravar	...	...	..	...
Piramalaikallan	...	...	...	...
Christian	3		3	...
Muslim (Rowther)	1	..	1	...
,, (Pattani)	2	...	2	...
Total	188	...	188	...

Table No. XXIII

Livestock statistics including fisheries

Caste/ Community	Milch Cattle (Cow)		Bull		Goat		Pig		Dogs		Fowl		Horse		Fisheries	
	No. of households owning	Total number	No. of households owning	Total number	No. of households owning	Total number	No. of households owning	Total number	No. of households owning	Total number	No. of households owning	Total number	o. of households owning	Total number	No of families rearing fish	No of families selling fish
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Vellalar	21	64	3	10	26	69	1	2	45	54	32	94	42	92	...	...
Chakkiliar	6	8	...	...	7	11	2	5	8	8	10	20	8	12	...	...
Naidu	20	61	3	3	13	26	...	...	26	39	28	62	29	54	...	...
Konar	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	1	1	2	6	...	...	...	...
Valaiyar	1	3	...	...	4	8	...	...	3	3	1	1	4	5	...	...
Nadar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	2	6	...	...	...	...
Pallan	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naicker	...	...	...	...	2	17	...	...	1	1	1	1	3	5	...	...
Gounder	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Asari	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Table No. XXIII (contd.)

Livestock statistics including fisheries

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Parayan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	1	2	1	6	...	...
Kuravar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oddar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Maravar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	3	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Christian	1	19	...	...	2	5	...	...	8	11	8	34	1	1	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Muslim (Pattani)	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...
Total	49	155	6	13	57	140	3	7	99	126	88	231	88	175	...	...

The corresponding cattle Census figures for 1956 is given below :

	Total No.
Bulls	47
Cows	114
Buffaloes	...
Sheep	...
Goats	22
Ponies	222
Pigs	10
Poultry	79

The present figures show a decrease in the number of ponies and bulls. But the number of goats and cows has increased.

Some of the common diseases affecting the cattle are Rinderpest, Haemorrhagic, Septicaemia, Black Quarter and Anthrax. These diseases sometimes prove fatal. Foot and mouth diseases also are common, but they are not fatal. Sometimes the affected cattle are taken to the Veterinary Hospital in Dindigul which recourse is, of course, hard and expensive. So in most of the cases, the local treatment like internal application of some paste prepared out of medical condiments are resorted to or the cattle is left to natural cure. Of late, the Block Development Office is taking steps to upgrade the livestock. Two pedigree bulls have been supplied to two villagers at half cost. The Extension Officer for Animal Husbandry meets the villagers at intervals and enlightens them on the need for scientific treatment of the diseased animals. In case of epidemics. preventive inoculation is given. The Block Development Office has also done a good deal in the development of the poultry. It has given handsome subsidy to the villagers.

Agricultural ceremonies

140. Before the initial operations for raising a coffee plantation or a plantain garden are commenced, pooja is offered to Lord Vigneswara who is represented by a lump of turmeric paste in conical shape and placed at a particular corner of the field known as 'Sani Moolai' facing east. The first turning of the soil is done on an auspicious day which is often fixed in consultation with an astrologer or some elders. The first bunch of the plantains reaped is offered to God which after pooja is distributed to the elders in the village.

During harvest, the peasants celebrate the '*Karasap Pongal*'. It is an occasion when a goat is sacrificed to the deity installed at Then Malai. Its meat is cooked and offered to the deity with '*Ven Pongal*' and '*Sarkarai Pongal*' and other eatables made out of rice.

The villagers celebrate Thai Pongal festival, which falls on the first of the Tamil month Thai, with much gaiety and enthusiasm. On the next day, they celebrate Mattu Pongal. It is a festival in honour of the cattle for all the services they render to the people. On this day, the cows and bulls are decorated and given special feeding. Certain rites to ward off evil eye are also performed to the cattle.

Income pattern

141. A study of income and expenditure pattern of the villagers helps us to know their standard of living. The analysis of income in the village, community-wise and the source of income are given in detail in the Table No. XXIV.

It could be seen from the above figures that the income level of the majority of the people lies far below Rs. 50 per month. Out of 418 households, 46·89% reported earning less than Rs. 50. 22 households among them are too poor and their income is less than Rs. 25 per month. 27·99% of the total households belong to the middle income sector. Only 105 households are reported to be earning more than Rs. 75 per month. 66 among them are earning Rs. 101 and over.

An occupation-wise analysis of income level shows that the highest income group consists mainly of plantation owners and other highly salaried workers in estates. Among 66 households earning more than Rs. 100 per month, 53 households (80·30%) are plantation owners. A few plantation labour households are also reported to be earning more than Rs. 100. But this is presumably due to the large number of earning members in those households. They also indicate that plantation owners dominate in the income groups of Rs. 71–100 and Rs. 51–75 also. The plight of plantation labourers is not so very satisfactory. Nearly

Table No. XXIV

Monthly income per household by occupation

Caste/ Community	Occupation of the head of household	Monthly income per household in the range of				
		Rs. 25 or less	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 & over
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Vellalar	Plantation owner	...	13	12	20	27
	Plantation labourer	2	27	11	2	1
	Selling rice cakes	1	...	1	...	...
	Shop owner	...	...	...	...	1
	Watchman	1	1	...	...	...
	Tailor	...	1	1	...	...
	Servant maid	...	1	...	...	...
	General labourer	1	...	...	...	...
Chakkiliar	Plantation labourer	2	37	24	2	7
	Plantation owner	...	9	8	5	4
	Sweeper	1	1	...	...	...
	Watchman	...	...	1	...	...
	Runner	...	...	...	...	1
Naidu	Plantation owner	2	8	12	9	18
	Plantation labourer	...	13	5	...	...
	Provision store	...	1	...	...	...
	Domestic servant	1	...	...	...	...
	Post-master	...	...	...	1	...
	Watchman	3	1	...	...	...
	Estate Maistry	...	...	1	...	...
	Teacher	...	...	1	...	...

Table No. XXIV (contd.)

Monthly income per household by occupation

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Konar	Plantation labourer	...	9	3	1	...
	Watchman	...	1	2	...	...
	Plantation owner	...	...	1	...	...
Valaiyar	Plantation labourer	1	2	4	...	...
	Plantation owner	...	...	2	3	...
	Watchman	...	1	...	...	...
Nadar	Plantation labourer	...	8	2	...	...
	Writer in Coffee Estate	...	...	...	...	1
Pallan	Plantation labourer	1	2	1	...	1
	Watchman	...	1	1	...	...
Naicker	Plantation labourer	1	2	1	...	...
	Plantation owner	...	...	...	1	1
Gounder	Plantation labourer	...	3	1	...	...
Chettiar	Plantation labourer	...	3	...	...	...
Asari	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
	Carpenter	...	1	...	...	...
Parayan	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	1	...
Kuravar	Sweeper	...	1	...	...	...
	Shepherd	1	...	...	...	...

Table No. XXIV (contd.)

Monthly income per household by occupation

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Pandaram	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
	Temple priest	1	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
Brahmin	Teacher	...	...	1	...	...
Oddar	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
Pandithar	Barber	...	1	...	...	...
Maravar	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	Plantation labourer	...	1	...	...	...
Christian	Plantation labourer	2	15	4	1	1
	Plantation owner	...	1	...	...	2
	Bee keeping	...	...	...	1	...
	Watchman	1	2	1	...	...
	Maistry	...	...	1	...	...
Muslim (Rowther)	Plantation labourer	...	1	3	...	...
	Teacher	...	...	1	1	...
	Plantation owner	...	...	...	...	1
„ (Pattani)	Plantation labourer	...	...	1	...	...
	Plantation owner	...	...	...	1	...
	Total	22	174	107	49	66

65·7% of them lead a hand-to-mouth existenee with a meagre income of less than Rs. 50 per month. All of them look under-fed, ill-clad and their houses dirty and insanitary. The mark of the cruel beast, called poverty, is seen too large on their faces. But still they too carry on their lives cheerfully and contentedly with an evident sense of resignation to their fate.

Income level of communities

142. The financial status of the various communities in the village can be understood from the following statement.

Caste/ Community	Income groups				
	Rs. 25 or less	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 & above
Vellalar	5	43	25	22	27
Chakkiliar	3	47	33	7	12
Naidu	6	23	19	10	18
Konar	1	10	6	1	...
Valaiyar	1	3	6	3	...
Nadar	...	8	2	...	1
Pallan	1	3	2	...	1
Naicker	1	2	1	1	1
Gounder	...	3	1	...	...
Chettiar	...	3	...	...	...
Asari	...	2	...	...	...
Parayan	...	1	...	1	...
Kuravar	...	1	1	...	...
Pandaram	...	1	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	...	1	...	...	...
Brahmin	...	...	1	...	...
Oddar	...	1	...	...	...
Pandithar	...	1	...	...	...
Maravar	...	1	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	...	1	...	...	...
Christian	3	18	6	2	3
Muslim	11	1	5	2	1

A fairly good proportion of Vellala households have a decent income. Nearly 20·16% among them earn Rs. 51–75 per month, 17.74% Rs. 76–100 and 21.77% above Rs. 100. Only 48 households out of 122 are reported to be living a hand-to-mouth existence and five among them are in a much poorer condition earning less than Rs. 25 a month. Among Chakkilians 32.35% are reported earning Rs. 51–75, 6.86% Rs. 76–100 and, 11.76% Rs. 100 and above. Among Naidus, the third major caste in the village, 25% are found in the income group of Rs. 51–75, 13·16% in the income group of Rs. 76–100 and 23·68% in the income group of Rs. 100 and above. The other communities found larger in the higher income groups are the Konars, Nadars, Pillais, Naickers etc. The communities of Chettiar, Asari, Pandithar, Maravar etc., are having very poor income and there is practically no family earning more than Rs. 50 a month.

Expenditure pattern

143. The expenditure pattern varies according to the income groups rather than according to the communities. The low income groups naturally limit their expenditure to the barest necessities of life. If their income shows an increase, they spend a little on other secondary necessities also. Expenditure on luxuries is mostly seen among the high income groups only. Our findings on the expenditure pattern is given in the Table No: XXV.

The average monthly expenditure per household amounts to Rs. 72.31 of which Rs. 43.15 is spent on food alone. Thus food items consume 59.67% of the total expenditure of the household. But even here, the proportion of expenditure on food varies with different income groups. The following table gives an idea of the average expenditure on food of various income groups.

Income group	Average expenditure on food	Percentage to total
Rs. 25 or less	16.27	64.86
Rs. 26 — 50	26.55	60.95
Rs. 51 — 75	38.75	62.36
Rs. 76 — 100	55·59	60.92
Rs. 101 above	93.74	56.83

INCOME LEVELS OF MAJOR COMMUNITIES

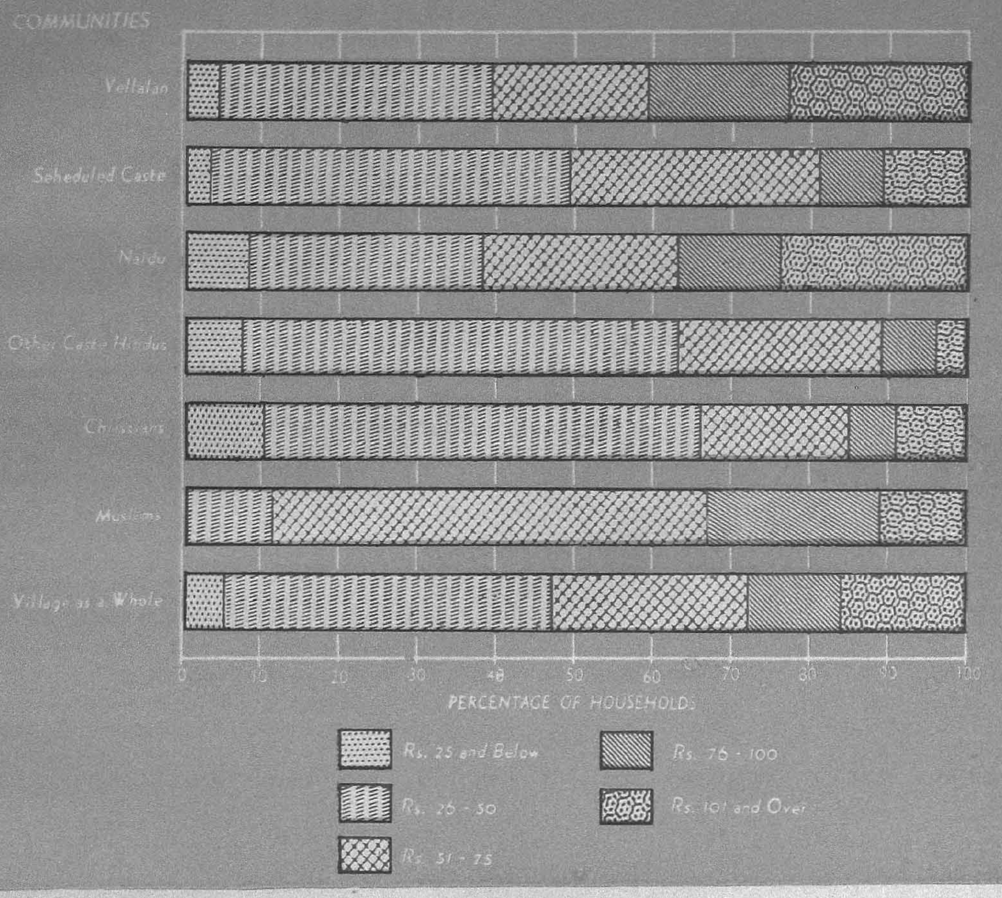
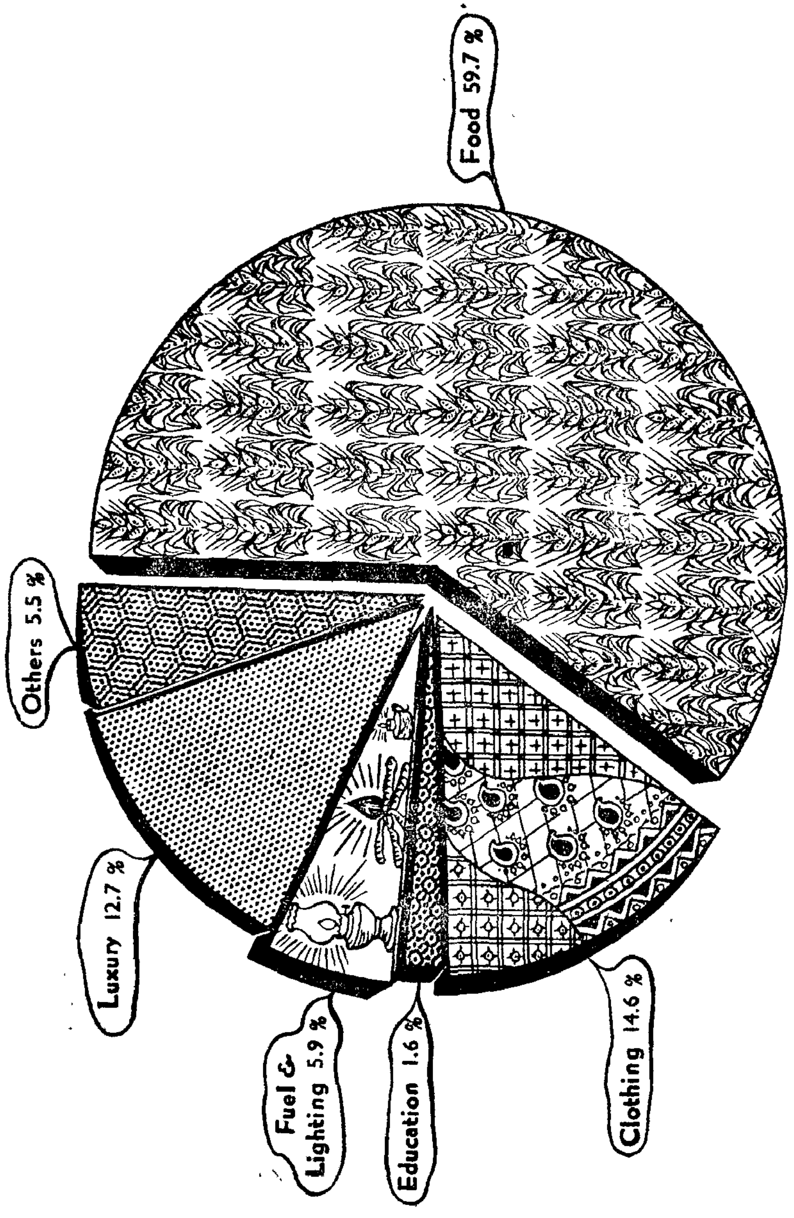


Table No. XXV

Average monthly expenditure per household by income groups

Items of expenditure	All households: Households	All households: Expenditure per household	Percentage of expenditure on food miscellaneous items: Total	Percentage of expenditure on food miscellaneous items: Percentage	Rs. 25 or less: No. of households	Rs. 25 or less: Average expenditure	Rs. 26-50: No. of households	Rs. 26-50: Average expenditure	Rs. 51-75: No. of households	Rs. 51-75: Average expenditure	Rs. 76-100: No. of households	Rs. 76-100: Average expenditure	Rs. 101 & over: No. of households	Rs. 101 & over: Average expenditure
					Number of households with a monthly income of									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
Food	418	43·15	18,035·00	59·67	22	16·27	174	26·55	107	38·75	49	55·59	66	93·74
Education	108	4·54	490·80	1·62	...	...	30	1·13	22	1·94	17	1·34	39	10·03
Clothing	418	10·57	4,418·00	14·62	22	3·05	174	5·49	107	8·20	49	14·22	66	27·61
Fuel	58	7·03	408·00	1·35	1	1·00	4	4·00	7	5·29	15	5·40	31	8·81
Lighting	416	3·28	1,365·75	4·52	21	1·76	174	2·39	107	2·84	43	4·19	66	6·18
Luxury	411	9·33	3,835·00	12·69	20	3·95	172	6·81	106	8·88	48	10·46	65	17·57
Others	242	6·91	1,672·50	5·53	4	2·50	100	3·68	60	5·02	28	8·71	50	15·00
Total	418	72·31	30,225·05	100·00	22	25·09	174	43·56	107	62·13	49	91·26	66	166·26

EXPENDITURE PATTERN
(Whole Village)



It would be seen that as the range of income increases, the percentage of expenditure on food gradually decreases. Correspondingly the proportion of expenditure on other necessities of life gradually increases.

The expenditure on clothing is another important item. On an average, each household spends about Rs. 16.57 per mensem on clothing. This constitutes 14.62% of the total expenditure. The variation of expenditure ranges from Rs. 3.05 in the poorest income group of Rs. 25 or less to Rs. 27·61 in the highest income group. Generally the expenditure on clothing is not an item that is required every month; rather the villager purchases all his clothing during the occasion of the village festivals and during other important festivals like Deepavali, Pongal etc. A man may purchase one or two pairs of dress articles to suffice for the whole year and similarly the womenfolk get two or three pairs of sarees and jackets. They may be either cotton or silk fabrics. In very poor households, such regular annual purchases are rare and they go in for new clothing of a cheap variety, once in two or three years, as and when the old clothes get torn and tattered and unusable. It is not uncommon to see poor people wearing clothes that are ragged and threadbare. The children of the poor class take to wearing the discarded dhoties and towels of the elders in the family.

Luxury is the third large item of expenditure and on an average, Rs. 9.33 per mensem is spent by every household on luxury. This constitutes 12.69% of the total expenditure. The average expenditure on it varies from Rs. 3.95 in Rs. 25 and less income group to Rs. 17.57 in Rs. 101 and above income group. This corroborates the general statement that with increase in income, the proportion of expenditure on luxuries also increases.

Among other items, the expenditure on education is to be particularly noted. It is distressing to observe that on an average only Rs. 4·54 is spent on education in a household. This constitutes 1·62% of the total expenditure. This amply shows how apathetic and indifferent the villagers are towards educating their children. We have seen in the preceding chapters how male and female education is neglected. The ordinary villager in Sirumalai is not inclined to spend much on education. Only a very few well-to-do land owners can afford to send their children for higher education to such places in the plains as Dindigul, Madurai, Madras etc. But even here, we do not see any pronounced tendency on the part of well-to-do people to seek higher education for their children barring, of course, a few rare cases. Under the system of free Elementary Education parents incur no expenditure towards school fees and they meet only the expenses towards the purchase of books and writing materials. This is perhaps another reason why the expendiure on education shows such a low percentage, but this cannot sufficiently explain the position.

Expenditure on marriage

144. Expenditure on marriage always results in a considerable drain of the income and savings of the household. This is, of course, a major item of expenditure that occurs once in a way, but still it undermines to some extent the financial stability of an ordinary family. The size and nature of expenditure on marriage by the various income groups in the village is furnished in the Table No. XXVI.

Generally speaking, the marriages in Sirumalai are little expensive, considering the financial status of the people there. Out of 418 households, only 53 households spend below Rs. 100 for a marriage. 34·93% of the households spend from Rs. 101 to Rs. 200. 24·16% of the households spend from Rs. 201 to Rs.400. A total of 86 households spend from Rs. 401 to Rs. 1,000 and 32 households spend above Rs. 1,000. The last two categories are generally plantation owners, big or small, who for the sake of prestige often spend a little lavishly on such occasions as marriages and festivals.

Expenditure on festivals

145. The expenditure on festivals varies from Rs. 5 spent by households with a monthly income of Rs. 25 or less to Rs. 101 and over by the highest income groups. Festivals are joyous occasions when even the poorest man has a tendency to spend something and enliven a little his hearth and home and the faces of his wife and children that usually lie enveloped in gloom almost throughout the year. The expenditure pattern of various income groups is given in the Table No. XXVII.

Table No. XXVI

Expenditure on marriage

Expenditure on marriage	Total	Number of households with a monthly income of				
		Rs. 25 & below	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs 101 & over
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nil	2	1	1	...	...	...
Rs. 50 or less	5	...	3	2	...	...
Rs. 51-100	46	6	29	8	...	3
Rs. 101-200	146	7	73	44	8	14
Rs. 201-400	101	7	40	32	11	11
Rs. 401-600	53	1	16	13	12	11
Rs. 601-800	7	...	2	...	3	2
Rs. 801-1,000	26	...	7	3	8	8
Rs. 1,001 & over	32	...	3	5	7	17
Total	418	22	174	107	49	66

Table No. XXVII

Ex enditure on festivals

Expenditure on festivals	Total	Number of households with a monthly income of				
		Rs. 25 & below	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 & over
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nil	5	...	1	1	2	1
Below Rs. 5	11	6	5	...	...	...
Rs. 6-10	13	2	8	1	...	2
Rs. 11-20	69	5	42	15	5	2
Rs. 21-30	56	3	25	21	4	3
Rs. 31-40	28	...	17	8	2	1
Rs. 41-50	62	3	25	20	5	9
Rs. 51-100	121	3	44	33	26	15
Rs. 101 & over	53	...	7	8	5	33
Total	418	22	174	107	49	66

It can be seen from the above table that even households with a chronically low income spends somewhat liberally during festivals. Among the various communities, Vellalas, Naickers and Naidus spend a lot more on festivals than other communities.

Indebtedness

146. A good majority of households in Sirumalai, both land owners and the labour class are steeped in debt. The necessity for indebtedness varies, of course, from person to person and also among income groups. But generally the big land owners borrow money for reclaiming and improving their lands and for general cultivation purposes. There is a small percentage of proprietors and the labour classes are obliged to borrow for their subsistence and sometimes for meeting such extraordinary expenditure as celebrating a marriage or an ear boring ceremony, etc. The extent of indebtedness in the village and among various communities is shown in the Table No. XXVIII.

INDEBTEDNESS BY INCOME GROUPS

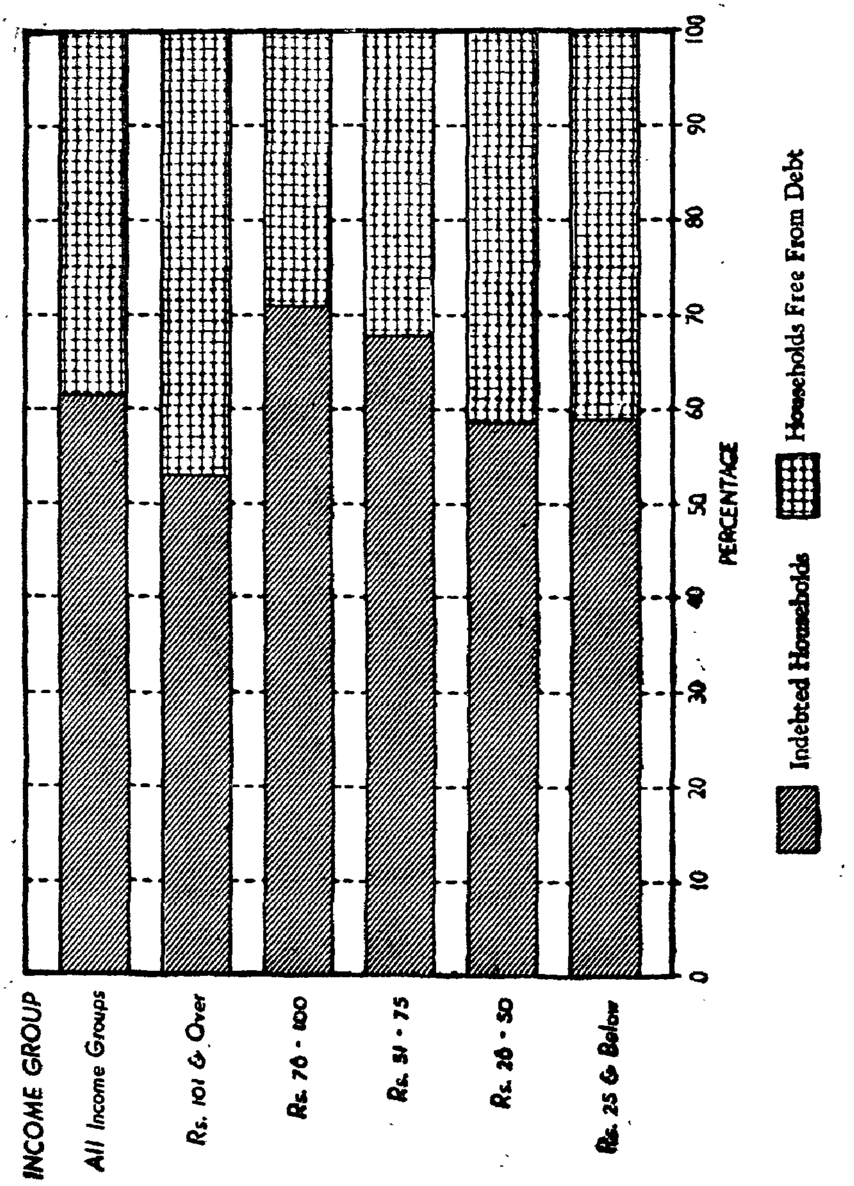


Table No. XXVIII

Indebtedness

Caste/ Community	Indebtedness by income group: Income group	Total No. of house-holds	No. of house-holds in debt	Percentage of indebted to total households	Total in-debted-ness	Average in-debted-ness
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Vellala	Rs. 25 and below	5	4	80·00	210·00	52·50
	Rs. 26 to 50	43	27	62·76	4,140·00	153·33
	Rs. 51 to 75	25	19	76·00	5,680·00	298·95
	Rs. 76 to 100	22	17	77·27	7,600·00	447·06
	Rs. 101 and over	29	19	65·52	22,240·00	1,170·53
	Total	**124**	**86**	**69·36**	**39,870·00**	**463·60**
Chakkiliar	Rs. 25 a below	3	2	66·67	250·00	125·00
	Rs. 26 to 50	47	39	32·98	4,125·00	105·77
	Rs. 51 to 75	33	31	93·94	7,655·00	246·94
	Rs. 76 to 100	7	5	71·43	3,400·00	680·00
	Rs. 101 and over	12	7	58·33	3,800·00	542·86
	Total	**102**	**84**	**82·35**	**19,230·00**	**228·93**
Naidu	Rs. 25 and below	6	2	33·33	175·00	87·50
	Rs. 26 to 50	23	13	56·32	2,230·00	171·54
	Rs. 51 to 75	19	10	52·63	2,500·00	250·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	10	7	70·00	4,900·00	700·00
	Rs. 101 and over	18	7	38·89	11,400·00	1,628·56
	Total	**76**	**39**	**51·32**	**21,205·00**	**5543·72**

Table No. XXVIII (contd.)

Indebtedness

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Konar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	10	1	10·00	200·00	200·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	6	3	50·00	2,210·00	736·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Tot	17	4	23 53	2,410·00	602·50
Valaiyar	Rs. 25 and below	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	3	1	33·33	100·00	100·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	6	4	66·67	675·00	168·75
	Rs. 76 to 100	3	2	66·67	700·00	350·00
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	13	7	53·85	1,475·500	210·71
Nadar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	8	4	50·00	300·00	75·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	2	1	50·00	50·00	50·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	1	...	...	...	...
	Total	11	5	45·46	350·00	70·00
Pallan	Rs. 25 and below	1	1	100·00	100·00	100·00
	Rs. 26 to 50	3	1	33·33	50·00	50·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	2	1	50·00	50·00	50·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	1	...	...	...	...
	Total	7	3	42·86	200·00	66·67

Table No. XXVIII (contd.)

Indebtedness

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Naicker	Rs. 25 and below	1	1	100·00	100·00	100·00
	Rs. 26 to 50	2	2	100·00	200·00	100·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	1	1	100·00	100·00	100·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	1	1	100·00	1,000·00	1,000·00
	Rs. 101 and over	1	...	...	...	...
	Total	6	5	83·33	1,400·00	280·00
Gounder	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	3	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	4	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	3	1	33·33	300·00	300·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	3	1	33·33	300·00	300·00
Asari	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	2	2	100·00	230·00	115·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	2	2	100·00	230·00	115·00

Table No. XXVIII (contd.)

Indebtedness

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Parayan	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	1	1	100·00	500·00	500·00
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	2	1	50·00	500·00	00·00
Kuravar	Rs. 25 and below	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	1	100·00	100·00	100·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	2	1	50·00	100·00	100·00
Pandaram	Rs. 25 and below	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	1	100·00	220·00	220·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	2	1	50·00	220·00	220·00
Agamudaiyar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	1	100·00	300·00	300·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	1	100·00	300·00	300·00

Table No. XXVIII (contd.)

Indebtedness

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Brahmin	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	...	...	...	...
Oddar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	...	...	...	...
Maravar	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	1	100·00	150·00	150·00
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	1	100·00	150·00	150·00

Table No. XXVIII (contd.)

Indebtedness

(1	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Piramalaikallan	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 76 to 100	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 101 and over	...	...	...	...	...
	Total	1	...	...	...	...
Muslim	Rs. 25 and below	...	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 26 to 50	1	...	...	...	...
	Rs. 51 to 75	5	2	40·00	600·00	300·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	2	1	50·00	300 00	300·00
	Rs. 101 and over	1	1	100·00	1,000·00	1,000·00
	Total	9	4	44·44	1,900·00	475·00
Christian	Rs. 25 and below	3	3	100·00	350	116·67
	Rs. 26 to 50	18	7	38·89	1,035	147·86
	Rs. 51 to 75	6	1	16·67	120	120·00
	Rs. 76 to 100	2	1	50·00	50	50·00
	Rs. 101 and over	3	1	33·33	150	150·00
	Total	32	13	40·63	1,705	131·15
Village Total	Rs. 25 and below	22	13	59·09	1,185	91·15
	Rs. 26 to 50	174	102	58·62	13,680	134·12
	Rs. 51 to 75	107	73	68·22	19,640	269·04
	Rs. 76 to 100	49	35	71·43	18,450	527·14
	Rs. 101 and over	66	35	53·03	38,590	1,102·57
	Total	418	258	61·72	91,545	354·83

On the whole, 61·72% of the households are indebted, and the total amount of indebtedness works out to Rs. 91,545. The average amount of indebtedness per household is Rs. 354·83 and the per capita indebtedness works out to Rs. 47·68. We see indebtedness in households among all the income groups. The highest percentage of indebted households is found among the income groups Rs. 51-75 and Rs. 76-100, where the respective percentage is 68·22 and 71·43.

Class	Total No. of households	No. of households indebted	Percentage of cols 3 to 4	Maximum amount of debt	Minimum amount of debt	Average amount of debt
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Owner cultivator	178	120	67	4,000	100	583
Agricultural labour	198	119	60	1,000	60	169
Non-agricultural class	42	19	43	1,000	55	155

The incidence of indebtedness among different livelihood classes has been studied and the relevant figures are given above.

It can be clearly seen that the percentage of indebted households is greater among cultivators than among other categories. The debt ranges from Rs. 100 to Rs. 4,000 and the average is Rs. 583 per household. The maximum debt in respect of other categories goes upto Rs. 1,000. The average debt works out to Rs. 169 and Rs. 155 respectively, for agricultural labour class and non-agricultural class.

The person worst affected by the burden of debt is the small cultivator. Ordinarily he is a planter and usually there is a normal time lag between raising of his plantation and the reaping of the harvest. During this long interregnum, he should have something to subsist on and he is also to attend to the proper maintenance of his plantation. The crops as well as his home drain his purse - provided, of course, he has a purse - from time to time. This inevitably drives him to the money - lender who usually charges usurious rates of interest and by the time he reaps his harvest and converts it into money, the burden of debt outgrows his ability to pay. He pays a portion of the debt from his harvest and still leaves a huge balance. Since he has practically no money left with him now, he is again at the mercy of the money lender. This vicious circle repeats again and again till his burden of debt crushes him financially. When the debt in course of time grows to an unmanageable size, the mortgaged land becomes the property of the creditor since the debtor is left with no other alternative except to sell away his land to clear the loan. The plantation coolies get loans from their landlords, usually free of interest, but this too forges a bond around them since it would be well nigh impossible for them to choose other landlords to offer their services till he clears his loan. The amount lent is recovered in easy instalments and sometimes adjusted towards their wages.

We have attempted a study of the community-wise indebtedness and the following statement gives the relevant figures.

Community	Total No. of households.	Indebted households.	Total debt.	Average per household.
			Rs.	Rs.
Vellalar	124	86	39,870.00	463.60
Chakkiliyar	102	84	19,230.00	228.93
Naidu	76	39	21,205.00	543.72
Naicker	6	5	1,400.00	280.00
Valaiyar	13	7	1,475.00	210.71
Konar	17	4	2,410.00	602.50
Other Hindu communities	39	16	2,350·00	146·88
Christian	32	13	1,705.00	131.15
Muslim	9	4	1,900.00	475.00
	418	258	91,545.00	354.83

It can be understood from the above table that the average indebtedness per household among Vellalas, Naidus, Konars and Muslims is greater. But the percentage of indebted households is high among Chakkilians, Naickers, Asari, Agamudaiyars and Maravars among whom nearly 80% to 100% are indebted. Among Vellalas too nearly 70% are indebted.

Cause of Indebtedness

147. The major causes of indebtedness in the village can be classified as follows: plantation expenses, family maintenance, purchase of property, marriages and other causes. The amount of debts under each head, community-wise is given in the Table No. XXIX.

Table No. XXIX

Indebtedness by causes

Caste/ Community	Cause	Indebtedness by cause of debt		
		Amount of debt in Rs.	Number of families in debt	Proportion of debt due to cause to the total amount of debt (Percentage)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Vellala	(a) Purchase of land	3,000	1	7·53
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	4,120	11	10·33
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	200	1	0·50
	(g) Sickness	500	1	1·25
	(h) Ordinary wants	9,760	40	24·48
	(i) Household cultivation	20,990	30	52·65
	(j) Industry run by the household	1,300	4	3·26
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	39,870	88	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Chakkiliar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	2,100	6	10·92
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	10,970	64	57,05
	(i) Household cultivation	5,560	12	28·91
	(j) Industry run by the household	600	2	3·12
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	**19,230**	**84**	**100·00**
Naidu	(a) hase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	3,955	13	18·65
	(i) Household cultivation	12,100	19	57·06
	(j) Industry run by the household	5,150	7	24·29
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	**21,205**	**39**	**100·00**

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Konai	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	200	1	8·30
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	210	2	8·71
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	2,000	1	82·99
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	2,410	4	100·00
Valaiyar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	50	1	3·39
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	275	2	18·64
	(i) Household cultivation	1,050	4	71·19
	(j) Industry run by the household	100	1	6·78
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	1,475	8	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Nadar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	350	5	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	350	5	100·00
Pallan	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	200	3	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	200	3	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Naicker	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	1,300	4	92·86
	(i) Household cultivation	100	1	7·14
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	1,400	5	100·00
Chettiar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	300	1	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	300	1	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Asari	(a) Purchase of land	...	..	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	230·00	2	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	..	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	230·00	2	100·00
Parayan	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	...	...	...
	(i) Household cultivation	500	1	100·00
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	500	1	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Kuravan	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	..
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	100	1	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	..
	Total	100	1	100·00
Pandaram	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	....
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	220	1	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	220	1	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agamudaiyar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	300	1	100·00
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	...	...	...
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	300	1	100·00
Maravar	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	150·00	1	100·00
	(i) Household cultivation	...	...	...
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	150·00	1	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Muslim	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	600	2	31·58
	(i) Household cultivation	1,000	1	52·63
	(j) Industry run by the household	300	1	15·79
	(k) Business run by the household	...	...	...
	Total	1,900	4	100·00
Christian	(a) Purchase of land	...	...	...
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	...	...	...
	(c) Marriages	...	...	...
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	...	...	...
	(g) Sickness	...	...	...
	(h) Ordinary wants	1,340	11	78·59
	(i) Household cultivation	65	1	3·81
	(j) Industry run by the household	...	...	...
	(k) Business run by the household	300	1	17·60
	Total	1,705	13	100·00

Table No. XXIX (contd.)

Indebtedness by causes

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Village Total	(a) Purchase of land	3,000	1	3·28
	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	50	1	0·05
	(c) Marriages	6,720	19	7·34
	(d) Funerals	...	...	...
	(e) To give dowry	...	...	...
	(f) To clear outstanding debts	200	1	0·22
	(g) Sickness	800	2	0·87
	(h) Ordinary wants	29,960	152	32·73
	(i) Household cultivation	41,265	68	45·08
	(j) Industry run by the household	100	1	0·11
	(k) Business run by the household	9,450	16	10·32
	Total	**91,545**	**261**	**100·00**

Among these heads, debt incurred for meeting the cultivation purpose forms a sizable part, i.e., about 45%. Next comes family maintenance and it forms about 32% of the total debt.

Sources of credit

148. There are two Co-operative Credit Societies in the village, one of which is exclusively meant for Harijans. The other society is at Pudur which has been revived recently and which was dormant for a pretty long time. But in spite of these two societies, quite a number of people still take loans from big cultivators and Mirasdars on a fairly high rate of interest. This is perhaps because there is a lot of procedural difficulty in getting loans from the Credit Societies and also because not enough funds are available to go round for all the persons that need loans. It is also possible, as it happens in most of the backward villages, that a small clique of comparatively well-to-do persons dominate these societies and distribute the loans to their favourites. This is only a surmise. The actual fact could not be verified. There is no money lending class as such in the village. A few small traders of plantation crops in the village and some fruit merchants in Dindigul also give loans to the villagers.

The various sources of credit available in the village with the details of borrowings and the prevailing rates of interest are given in the following statement.

Source of credit	No. of households.	Rates of interest: Below 6 percent	6-12 percent	12-18 percent	More than 18 percent
Private money lender	159	9	142	6	1
Government agencies	2	2	...	...	...
Co-operative Society	2	1	1	...	...
Land Lords (free of interest)	95	...	...	...	...
	258	12	143	6	1

Though there is no money-lending class as such in the village, there are a few individuals in the village who make much money by giving loans and though that may not be their sole occupation, it is certainly one of their important sources of income. It can be understood from the above table that these money-lenders form a major source of credit from whom the bulk of borrowings is made, the percentage being 61. Only four families have availed themselves of the credit facilities afforded by the Government agencies and the Co-operative Societies. Most of the illiterate persons do not come forward to take loans from the Co-operative Credit Societies and the Government agencies because they think that any manner of involvement with Government and other official institutions is risky. The irrational dread of Governmental and quasi-Governmental institutions comes very much in the way of their prosperity. As has already been told, they also do not like the endless procedural red-tape which usually causes much impatience, annoyance and loss of valuable time.

Besides, the loans granted by the Government agencies and the Co-operative Societies are short term loans usually, to be repaid within one year. This does not serve the purpose of the planter who has to wait for his crops four or five years after raising the plantation. The income of the cultivator is so much dependent on the vagaries of Nature, that it is often impossiple for him to repay the loan within the stipulated period. He prefers, therefore, that source of credit where adjustments, postponements and concessions are possible.

But with all these, the Co-operative Societies in the village are also gradually covering more and more ground and proving from year to year more and more useful.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Social structure

149. Sirumalai has a complex social structure. Racially it is multi-ethnic comprising as many as 18 communities. It is an extremely harmonious composition, the people living their humdrum routine life with perfect mutual concord.

As has been already adverted to, there are people representing the Hindu, Islam and Christian faiths. In its economic make-up, it has different livelihood classes, the owner-planter, the plantation-cooly and the non-agricultural workers of different categories. Generally the people have an enduring capacity for hard work. Sluggishness seems to be alien to their nature. The males are not so very well proportioned physically, but they are very strong and agile and display a brisk active nature. The women are equally hard working, generally intelligent, brimming with a desire to help the menfolk in every possible way. In the following pages, we attempt to discuss the inter-relationship between the castes, the customs among different communities, the caste and village institutions and the inter-dependence of these on each other.

Intercaste relationship

150. There are 18 castes in the village, though only three or four castes are numerically predominant and for our purpose important. The intercaste relationship is as cordial as it could be and perfect amity and concord prevail among them. Fixing up an order of precedence and relative superiority among these castes is not by any means an easy job. But a certain order of precedence has traditionally been recognised though economic conditions tend to obliterate these distinctions. In villages in the plains where every community may have a sufficient representation in the total population of the village, where each community may be economically not below par, one may find a high degree of community-consciousness and their zealous effort to retain their superiority over other communities. But in Sirumalai where almost all the communities are economically not so very well off and where in fact most of the people are wallowing in poverty and adversity, no community is interested in advertising itself as superior one and belittling other communities. But the traditional superiority of certain communities over others is in some way recognised.

Caste hierarchy

151. In the social hierarchy, the Brahmin has always held the highest place. There is only one Brahmin in the village and he too lives single. He does not accept food from any man of any community in the village. He cooks his own food. Barring this single Brahmin, Vellalas are the most important community, economically and socially. They inter-dine with Naidus, Naickers, Konars and Valaiyars. Communities of Kuravan, Pandithar, Pallan and Chakkiliyars are considered socially very inferior since they are the Scheduled Castes and neither the Naidus, Naickers, Konars or any other high caste people would ever think of interdining with these communities. The Pallans are supposed to be superior to Parayans and Chkkiliyars and, therefore, they do not inter-dine with these two communities. Among other Hindu communities, the Maravars, Agamudaiyars, and Piramalaikallans are treated on a par with each other and they are supposed to be just below Vellalas, Naidus etc. In spite of community barriers, communal discord is wholly absent and collective consciousness on the part of the people of all communities as a whole is gradually building up.

Intercaste marriage

152. Quite a few intercaste marriages have taken place in the village. Within the last twenty years, more than eight inter-caste marriages have been reported. Among them, boys belonging to Naidus, Pillais, Asaris, Muslims and Christians have married Chakkiliya girls and three Harijan boys have married Muslim, Valaiyan and Servai girls respectively. These marriages, of course, have no social sanction. But still the erring parties have not been penalised or victimised by the respective caste institutions. They do not also seem to suffer any discriminatory treatment from their caste people. The ancient forms of punishment like ex-communication are not now-a-days strictly observed,

The society may look down upon the parties to an inter-caste marriage in the beginning and they may be treated with great reservations. They may not be invited to social functions. But with the passage of years, the rigour gradually fades and their relationship with the rest of the society and the caste people is perfectly normalised.

Inter caste-marriage, whatever the status of the parties, is always very much looked down upon and resented.

Untouchability

153. Though an Act has been passed for the removal of Untouchability, it is as prevalent here as it is elsewhere. In isolated places like Sirumalai, it is apt to be more marked and it is indeed so in Sirumalai. The Harijans are not allowed to live amid the caste Hindus, nor anywhere close to them. As has been stated elsewhere, the Harijans live apart from the caste Hindus in a separate settlement, and among the Harijans, the different communities live separate from one another. The Harijans are not allowed to draw water from the wells used by the high caste people and they are not allowed to enter their houses. Chakkiliapatti, a hamlet of Sirumalai village is exclusively occupied by Chakkilians though there are two or three households of Muslims living amid them. During our discussions with the villagers, it was found that there is practically no villager who is aware of the legal prohibition of the practice of untouchability. Even the one or two in the village that may be aware of the Act scarcely observes it in practice. But, despite all these, one sight seems to be quite frequent and common. In their uphill and downhill journeys, Chakkilians and other Harijans and caste Hindus are found in the same vehicles. This is perhaps due to the lack of sufficient number of vehicles and other traffic facilities.

If the caste Hindus are uncompromising in their practice of untouchability, the Scheduled Castes are willing parties to it. There is hardly any member of the Scheduled Caste who would like an infraction of the age-old practice. It is only too evident that he wants to be treated only as an untouchable. Even if a caste Hindu feigns to show some equality, he dreads to accept it and most respectfully declines it. Besides, almost all the Scheduled Caste people are dependent economically on the caste Hindus for their subsistence. Of all the chains, economic chains are evidently the strongest, hardest, and fastest. The Community Development Organisation through its publicity media like printed pamphlets and visual education facilities can do something to enlighten the people. The people of Sirumalai are as pliable as hey are hard.

Caste Panchayat

154. Caste Panchayat is an institution that was once very strong and unassailable but which has now begun steadily declining in importance with the gradual fading out of some of the caste traditions. But still we cannot say that these Caste Panchayats have died a natural death and in those villages where modern institutions have not grown up, the Caste Panchayat is still exercising some power and influence and is able to control the life of the individual in these matters which are strictly communal. It is something like a council of elders, the presiding elder being called '*Nattanmaikkaran*' or '*Gounder*' etc., as the case may be. The infractions of caste traditions and rules come within its purview. The Caste Panchayat meets periodically and sometimes there are some extraordinary meetings also to enquire into offences and to organise the caste for certain important undertaking or a function. If these caste elders happen to be economically powerful, the council also correspondingly becomes powerful. If the head of this council happens to be a strong man who can dominate and domineer, his word is accepted as inviolable law. This office usually goes by heredity.

In Sirumalai only the Chakkilian community has the Caste Panchayat which seems to be working on quite rigorous lines. Among them, the caste council is empowered even to decide upon matters relating to divorce and to order a divorce. Three divorce cases have been enquired into and adjudged by them within the past ten years.

Case I

Perumal	Kunukku
(A)	(B)

'B' was married to a particular individual. Later she joined 'A' and lived with him for some years and got children through him. Since there was no mutual understanding between the two and constant quarrel broke out between them, 'B' asked for a separation at the Caste Council on the plea that she cannot live with him in a state of perpetual rupture. The council tried to effect a compromise between the two, but its efforts failed. Consequently, the Council allowed the separation, receiving a fine of Rs. 10·50 from the initiator of the proceedings. Usually a part of the

fine amount is shared among the Council members and the other part goes to the Caste Fund.

Case II

Alagar	Perumalakka
(A)	(B)

'B' is already a divorcee. 'A' married her. Subsequently 'A' became a leper and so 'B' pleaded for a divorce at the Caste Council. The Council allowed the divorce on the ground of physical disability.

Case III

Muthuradan	Sibbi
(A)	(B)

'A' reported to the Council that his wife had connection with another man while 'B' countercharged that 'A' had connection with a girl. This matter was enquired in detail by the Council. 'A' paid a fine of Rs. 10·50 and the divorce asked for was granted.

Ritual structure

155. There are three distinct religious groups in the village-Hindus, Muslims and Christians, Hindus being numerically predominant. Hindus constitute 92% of the total population and Christians and Muslims constitute a very negligible proportion of about 8%. The villagers of Sirumalai are as religious as any villager could be, if not more. There is no Hindu in the village who knows anything about the higher philosophical side of Hindu religion. The knowledge of almost all the Hindus is confined to a few anecdotes of Hindu mythology and an outline of the knowledge of the Hindu epics, Ramayana and Mahabharatha. They know well the stories of the principal Gods of the Hindu pantheon. To this must be added a living faith in spirits, ghosts, demons, witchcraft and magic. Apart from these, the religion is mostly of a ritual character. Almost all the Christians of this village are Roman Catholics and are found in large numbers in Pudur and in St. Joseph's Estate. There are only nine households of Muslims which are found in Pudur and Chakkiliapatti hamlets. They belong to two divisions, viz., Rowther and Pathans. Both of them belong to 'Sunni' sect.

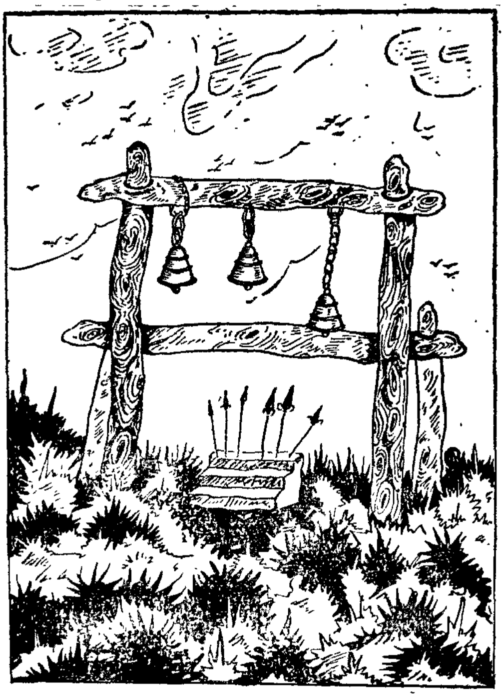
Hindus

156. The Hindus of this village may be divided as elsewhere into Saivites and Vaishnavites, but this distinction is rarely discernible. Both the sects join often in common worship. The Vaishnavites have no scruples in going to Saivite temples and worship Saivite Gods like Lord Subramania, Vinayaga and Siva etc. So too the Saivites freely go to Vaishnava temples. The Hindus of this village have no fixed time for daily worship and no Hindu visits any temple everyday. But once or twice a week, the womenfolk made it a point to go to a temple of their own in the village and light a wick in the stone or metal lamp that is found there and burn a camphor. Any villager as he goes along the streets or when he is going for work, if he has to go past a temple, he stops before the temple, knocks gently his head with his hands crossed as a token of his piety and respect for the deity, and then passes his way. It would appear that quite a good number of menfolk do not bother very much about the religion and are just indifferent to it. But they are by no means atheistic or antipathetic to religion or Gods. In the humdrum routine of their life which is a little exacting, in their poverty and economic backwardness, amid a variety of worries that are eating into their life, these people have hardly the leisure or the mental quiet to devote themselves to religious duties or worship of Gods. They remember God, rather their particular God, whenever they feel like remembering and mentally offer a few words of worship on the spot. There are, of course, quite a few people in the village, who lavishly smear their forehead with sacred ash and look very religious and exceedingly pious. The Gods of this village have each quite a number of very religious and pious devotees and also a number of indifferent worshippers, but certainly no critics. For most of the aged people, religion is a great solace and they spend more time in worshipping God, and in reading and discussing ancient books of religion, epics and puranas. But even their number too seems to be gradually declining. It is a general phenomenon everywhere that religion is gradually relaxing its hold upon the people and Sirumalai is no exception to that. But religion is more in evidence in Sirumalai than it is likely to be in the plains. Perhaps that is invariably the case with all unsophisticated people living in a backward, interior, isolated and inaccessible village like Sirumalai. We could not come across any man in Sirumalai who was too very fervent religiously.

Temples

157. There are eight temples in Sirumalai dedicated to various deities. Four of them are in Pazhaiya Ur,

three in Pudur and one in Chakkiliapatti. The four temples in Pazhaiya Ur are dedicated to Kaliamman (the Indian Bellona), Vinayaga (the elephant headed God), Vellimalai Andavan (a form of Siva) and Sastha (the guardian deity of the village). The Kaliamman temple has no idol, but the deity is represented by a pillar tied to which hangs an oil lamp. The pillar has all over its surface black stain of oil offerings made to it by the devotees during their worship. The Vinayaga is a small stone structure situated near the school. There is a stone idol of this God in the temple. In front of the God Vinayaga, there is an image of the mouse which is usually the deity's carrier or vehicle (vahana). The Vellimalai temple is situated on the



The Vellimalai temple

south-west of Pazhaiya Ur, facing the original legendary forest clad temple, situated at Vellimalai 2½ miles away from the village. Since access to this original temple is next to impossible, because of the dense impenetrable forest, worship meant for the presiding deity of the original temple is done here in this nearby village situated southwest of Pazhaiya Ur and this worship is known as "*Ethir Sevai*". The Sastha temple is more popularly known as Aiyanar temple, Aiyanar being the guardian deity of the village. Aiyanar is a common deity in most of the small villages. In most villages, it is believed that he rides round the village in the dead of night on the back of a terrific horse, accompanied by hordes of warriors known in Tamil as "*Virans.*". He is supposed to be a very powerful and aggressive deity capable of meeting out terrible punishment even for slightest disrespect. Consequently, the villagers take every effort to propitiate him from time to time and keep him in agreeable humour. However, the amount of devotion that is shown to him seems to be steadily and gradually on the decline due to economic circumstances of the people and the hard days the people are living in.

The three temples at Pudur are dedicated to Palichiamman (a demon Goddess), Vellimalai Andavar and Lord Vigneswara. The latter two temples are stone structures while the former has only a scaffold for sacrificing animals and which is known as "Bali Peedam.". The one solitary temple at Chakkiliapatti hamlet is dedicated to Muthalamman, a demon Goddess.

Festival

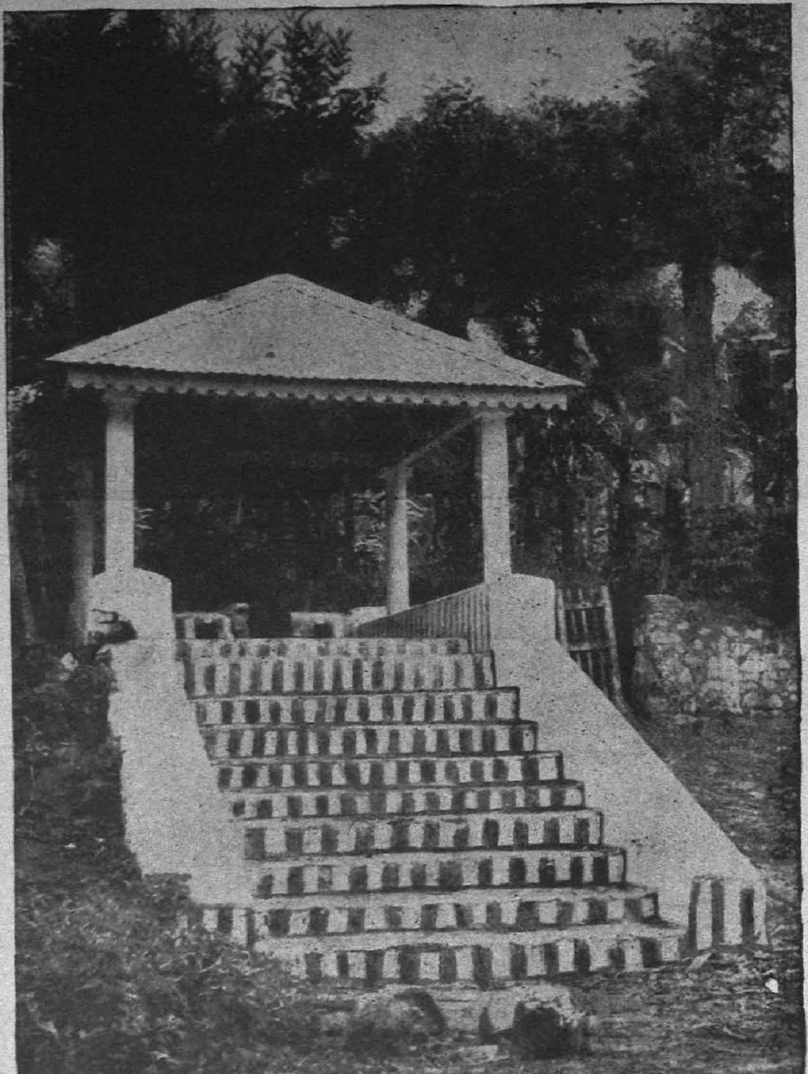
158. The important festivals in Sirumalai are Kaman Pandigai, Panguni Uthiram, and Vellimalai festival. The people offer communal worship to the deities Kali, Mari and Muthalamman during certain days of the year when Pongal festivals are conducted.

Panguni Uthiram

159. This festival is celebrated in honour of Lord Muruga and it falls in the Tamil month of Panguni (March-April) when the moon traverses the constellation of Uthiram in the Zodiacial sign of Virgo. It is a one-day festival when the picture of Lord Muruga is placed in a decorated chapram (modification of a palanquin resembling the super-structure of a temple car) and taken in procession along the streets with devotional music sung in a chorus by the people accompanying it. This music is known as *Bhajanai.* The chapram is stopped before every household which wants to offer worship to the deity with *Deeparadanai* and by breaking of coconut and waving of burning camphor. The procession is headed by a troupe of men in fancy dresses and comic guises. The procession ends in Bhajanai Madam where the celeb-

The Vellimalai temple at Pudur.

The idols installed in Vellimalai temple at Pudur.



The Vinayagar temple at Pazhaiyavry.

ration comes to an end with the distribution of puffed corns, and fried grams (kadalai, pori, sundal).

Vellimalai festival

160. This is an expensive festival, celebrated once in ten years on a very lavish and grand scale and lasts for fifteen days. The celebration of this festival is informed to the village public by tom-tom, days in advance. The villagers make a lot of willing contributions in cash and kind.

On the festival day, a husked coconut with its tuft set into the mouth of a small vessel with a globular bottom and covered with margosa leaves and flowers is decorated with gold and silver jewels. This is called '*Karagam*'. This is then taken to the three temples, viz., the Vellimalai temple, the Kaliamman temple and the Sastha temple. The order of precedence is as has been stated here. The womenfolk accompany the Karagam with Mavilakku. Mavilakkus are small lamps made of flour paste where ghee soaked cotton wicks are set burning. This flour paste is tasty and is eaten with relish after the puja and the offerings to the deity are over. The following day the Karagam is taken to the tank. On the way to the tank, at the doorstep of every devotee's house, one pot-full of turmeric water is poured on the Pujari by the people in the house. The next day is the day of Guru Puja when all the people without any distinction are served with free food in the open and a free kitchen is run for the congregation. On the following day there is animal sacrifice to the deity when a he-goat is cut and offered to the deity. Its meat is cooked and served along with rice to the villagers. The same sacrifice is done at the Sastha temple on the following day.

Kaman Pandigai

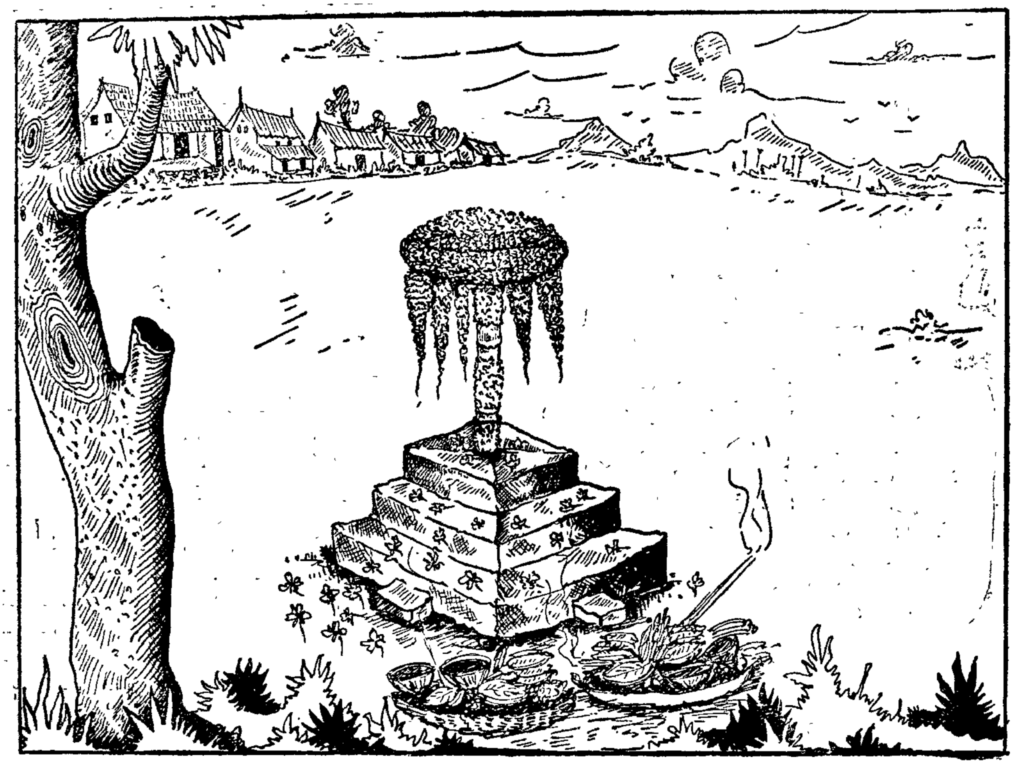
161. This is a festival in honour of the God of Love, popularly known as Manmatha. He has got several other names of which 'Kaman' is one. This festival goes to show the high place which the Hindus accorded to the concept of love. In classical times, this festival seems to have been very popular and celebrated with immense gusto and enthusiasm. Since ancient culture now-a-days survives mostly in villages only, we find this festival being celebrated only in villages and not in towns. But this festival has survived in such a village as Sirumalai is ample evidence of the tenacity and staying power of the ancient religious culture of India and particularly Tamil Nad.

According to the mythological legend relating to this love God, he was born out of the mind-stuff of Lord Thirumal. He is an embodiment of charming masculinity and he is the Hindu counterpart of European Cupid. His consort Rathi is the incarnation of all possible and impossible feminine beauty and her dazzling charm is such that it cannot be laid down in script. God Kaman belongs to the secondary order of the Hindu pantheon. His portfolio is the generation of amorous temptations in both sexes. With his bow of sugarcane and arrow of flowers, he is said to shoot at young men and women and kindle in them the fire of love. He has got an army to carry out his commands, but the entire army consists only of beautiful women. The cool and gentle breeze is his chariot. His Vehicle is parrot. Darkness is his carrier. He has got a flag with the inscription of a fish on it. The legend has it that he once attempted to kindle carnal desire in no less a person than Lord Siva himself the lord of the Lords and the God of the Gods, the highest and the most unreachable in the Hindu pantheon. This he did on the instigation of Devas, of course, with a view to achieve, a great and noble end. But Lord Siva would never fall a victim to his designs since he is the one that has burnt all desires and sits beyond the reach of all temptations. Lord Siva coming to know of the foolish and stupid attempt of the God Kaman reduced him to ashes by the twinkling of his invisible third eye on his forehead in a fit of uncontrollable anger. But Rathi, the wife of Kaman, moved Lord Siva to pity by her most pathetic entreaties. Lord Siva, touched by the supplications of Rathi, now decreed that Lord Kaman would come back to life, but he would not have a body and move in the Universe as a disembodied power and he would be visible only to the eyes of his wife Rathi and to nobody else.

The festival falls during the Tamil month of Masi (February–March) and lasts for about ten days. The festival is proclaimed to the village public by the beating of tom-tom and by the hoisting of a decorated pole in some central part of the village. The festival takes place in Pazhaiya Ur usually in front of the present Panchayat Office. The sacred pole is decorated with the branches of castor plant, Sithagathi tree, Peikkarumbu (a variety of sugarcane never eaten by public) and a plantain-sucker. This pole represents the God Kaman. It is further decorated with jasmine, rose and arali flowers. On the top of the pole is tied a cloth soaked in turmeric and containing a small pearl, coral, an iron piece, turmeric, betel leaves and

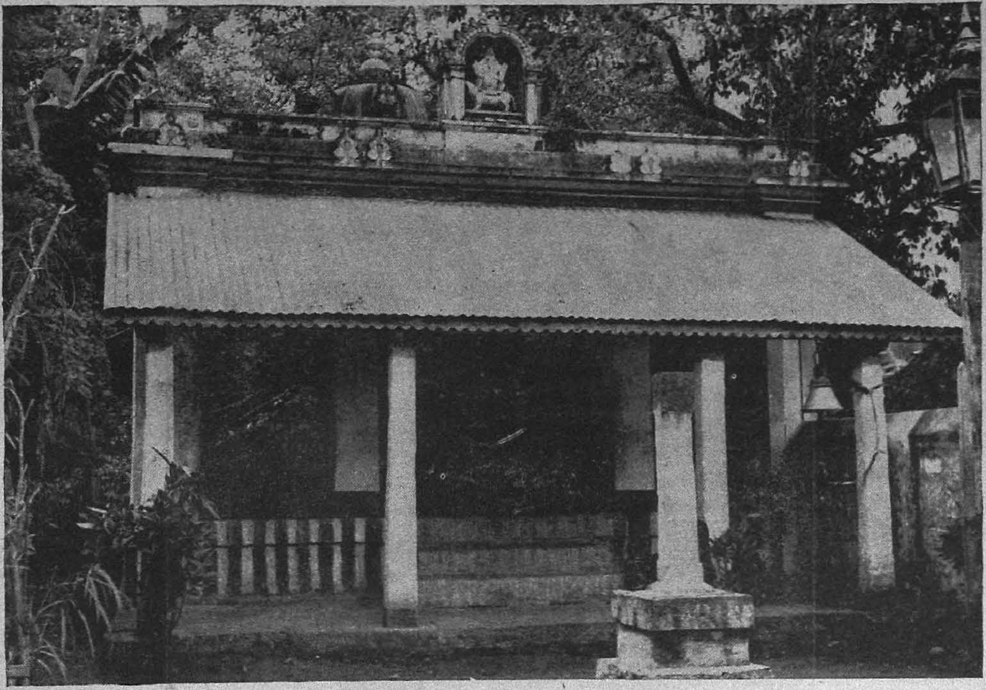
arecanuts. This symbolic, Kaman is taken to the temple of Lord Vinayaga by the caste head of the Vellala community and a puja is performed to it. The pole is next taken round the temple thrice, accompanied by a loud chorus of vocal and instrumental music. Then it is taken to the spot where the festival is actually to take place and there it is hoisted in the centre of a specially erected dais. Offerings are made to God Kaman as well as to Lord Siva.

The festival is wound up after a lapse of fifteen days. On the night of the fifteenth day, women take

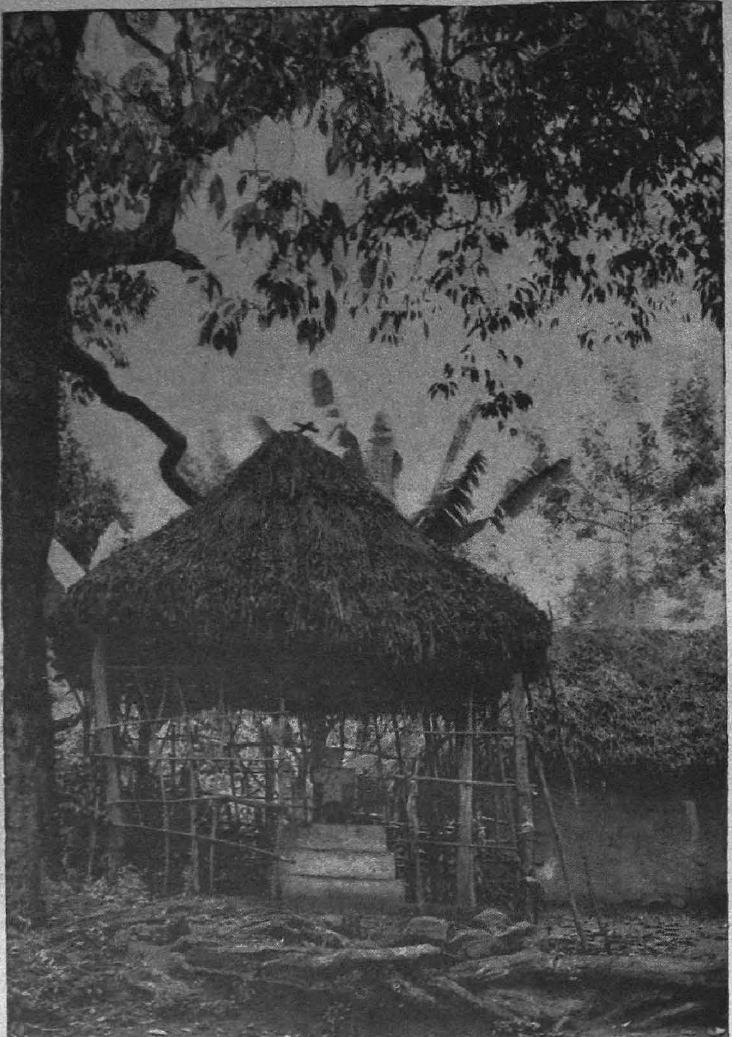


The effigy of Kaman in flora ldecoration

Mavilakkus, an edible offering made of flour on which is placed burning mud lamp. The womenfolk offer pujas to God Kaman. This is followed by the enacting of a drama *Therukkoothu* which is a farce representing the mythological legend relating to Kaman and Rathi. At the end of the drama, the effigy of Kaman is set fire to and while the effigy is burning, women sing songs of lamentation. On the following day, the ash remains of Kaman is dissolved in the village tank or in a flowing rivulet and some ceremonies are performed. On that night, puffed corns and other small eatables are distributed to the villagers.



Vigneswara temple in Pudur.



An impoverished Church built by Harijan converts at Pudur.

Muthalamman festival

162. This is a festival exclusively celebrated by the Chakkiliars. However, other people also congregate on the occasion. It is supposed to be a festival of some importance and it generates a lot of enthusiasm and eclat. It is conducted once in three years in summer, sometime during April-May and lasts for three days. It begins in an interesting and somewhat comical fashion. A stone is kept hidden by some elders among Chakkiliars which the Pujari is required to find out by the grace of the Amman. When the hunt for the stone is over and the Pujari is able to discover it, the stone is given a holy bath and a puja which is known as 'Abishegam' is made. The stone is decked in a piece of yellow cloth and decorated with flowers. Then it is installed in the Muthalamman temple. During the three days of the festival, the Chakkilians engage in entertainments of diverse description, one among them being the enacting of dramas bearing on local legends and mythologies. On the final day, the womenfolk offer Mavilakku to the Amman and special pujas are performed to the deity.

Other festivals

163. Apart from these special local festivals, the villagers also celebrate other festivals common to all the Hindus, viz., Deepavali, Pongal, 18th of Adi, Karthigai Deepam etc. Of all these festivals, Deepavali and Pongal are celebrated with extraordinary enthusiasm and tremendous gusto. Pongal is the farmers' festival, the festival of thanks giving to Sun God. Deepavali as we know is the festival of light. On these occasions people choose to wear new dress and eat special feasts. Sugarcane is particularly auspicious for Pongal festival when it is consumed in large numbers.

Pongal always takes place during the winter solstice, the period when the sun having finished its course through the southern hemisphere turns to the north again and comes back to visit the people of India. It falls on the day when he enters the Zodiacal sign of Capricorn. The feast lasts for three days. The first is called Bogi Pongal. It is a day of diversions and amusements. The second day is called Surya Pongal. It is a sort of offering to the Sun God. The married women bathe with their clothes on and while still dripping wet, put, rice in boiling milk in a vessel on an oven in the open air. The oven is usually made of three big stones. As soon as it begins to simmer, they all cry out in a chorus "*Pongalo Pongal, Pongalo Pongal*". Almost immediately afterwards, they take off the vessel from the fire and put it before the idol of Vigneswara to whom they offer a portion of the rice. Another portion is given to the cows and the rest is eaten by the members of the household.

The third day is the day of Mattu Pongal, i.e., the Pongal for the cows and bulls. On this day saffron powder along with the leaves of margosa tree is mixed with water in a big vessel. After stirring the ingredients well, they sprinkle the cows and the oxen with the liquid, walking round them three times. The horns of the cows and the oxen are fully smeared with this red coloured liquid, and the menfolk in the house now turn successively towards the four directions with folded hands and then pay devout obeissance to the animals. Round the necks of these animals are hung garlands of green leaves, inter-laced with flowers. Sometimes on these garlands are hung eatables like vadai, coconuts and fruits which, as they are shaken off by the animals, are enthusiastically scrambled for and devoured by the small urchins and even grown-ups following them. The cows are driven outside the village and are made to scatter in all directions by the aid of drums and noisy instruments. The cattle are supposed to enjoy unlimited freedom on this day to graze anywhere they like.

Pongal is indeed a festival when the people hail with joy and an abundance of merriment the great fertilizing luminary, the Sun.

Christian festivals

164. The most important Christian festival that is celebrated on a fairly showy scale is Christmas. It is, of course, a universal festival. In Sirumalai, it is celebrated with great eclat and exuberance of enthusiasm. But an important fact to be noted is that most of the Christians here belong to the lowest strata of society and are economically very backward. Quite a number of them live a wretched existence. But still the delight of the day evokes among them a gay and lighthearted feeling at least for a day and at least on this day life looks to them worth living. A priest from Dindigul usually visits the village on this day to conduct the mass in the Chapel at the St. Joseph's Estate. Apart from Chistmas, the other festivals like Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Assumption of Mary etc., are observed, but on an extremely modest scale.

On the day of the festival of Assumption of Mary, a statue of Mary is taken in a decorated palanquin uphill to the Siluvaiparai (a rock named after the Holy Cross). The palanquin is accompanied by a procession of Christians singing hymns and chanting prayers. At the Siluvaiparai, the priest delivers a sermon after which puffed corns etc., are distributed to the congregation. The statue is then taken back to the Church where benediction or evening service is conducted. The festival now comes to an end.

Muslim festivals

165. The Muslims of this village are just a handful. There is no Mosque in the village. Muslims are recent migrants from other places. They do their prayers at home. During th emonth of Ramzan, they take to fasting like all the Muslims all over the Muslim world. But religion is not very much in evidence among them because of the poor economic conditions. Except for their mode of dress, and a few religious practices, they can be said to have attained a merger with the other communities in the village barring, of course, marital commerce. They also observe the other important Muslim festivals like Moharam etc. Except with a few individuals, the observance of these festivals is a little more than nominal.

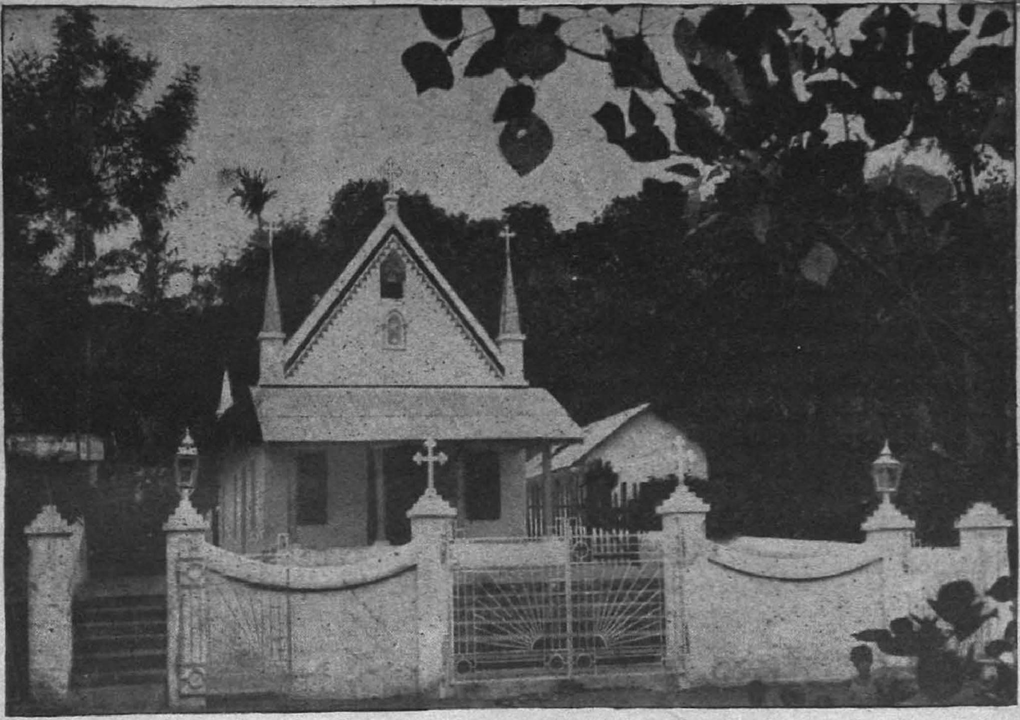
Recreation

166. There are very few recreations, and facilities in the village. In the evenings we see gossiping groups sitting in the outer pials of houses, verandah of the Vinayaga temple, tea shop and small rocky elevations abutting the streets. Recently a radio set has been installed at the Panchayat Board Office at Pazhaiya Ur under the Panchayat Development Scheme. Quite a few youths and some elders collect around it in the evenings. But their chief interest in sitting around the radio is mostly to hear cine songs. The villagers after a hard day's labour in the plantations have very little time to recreation. The most popular form of recreation now-a-days everywhere is Cinema which is absent in Sirumalai village. Whenever the villagers are desirous of seeing a picture, they go down to Dindigul where there is a good number of Cinema houses. Card playing is another popular recreation among the villagers, particularly among the elders and the grown-ups.

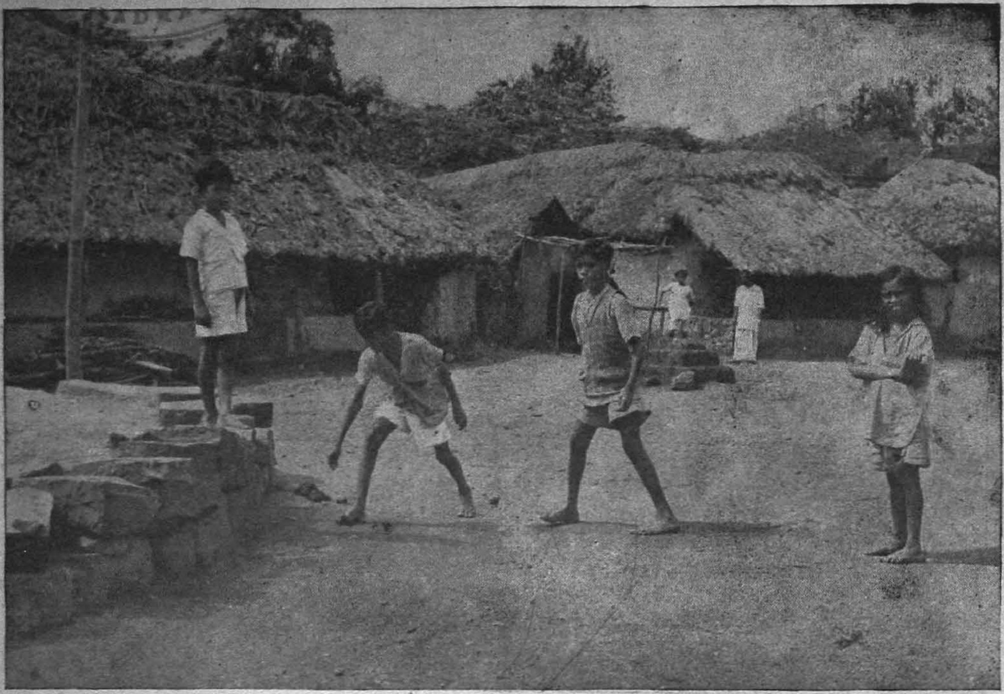
The young boys spend their evenings and their idle hours in such indigenous games as Nondi, Kilithattu, Kabadi and Kuthiraithal. Marble playing is perhaps the most important game among the small boys. Womenfolk generally prefer indoor games like Thayam, and Pallankuzhi. Young girls indulge in rope playing or hopping and Pandikattam. Apart from these games, the village festivals provide some opportunities for recreation. Then there are folk dramas and therukkoothus enacted by the youngsters in the village. There are also individual groups entertaining the people by appearing in funny costumes and fancy dresses and putting on masks and disguises.

Folklore

167. The folk songs contain a rich moral and social content. They are sung during festivals, marriages and planting and harvesting seasons. They cover a variety of subjects ranging from the highest philosophy to very ordinary mundane matters. Some of them are full of a serious air while others are full of drollery. Some extol the religious value of piety while some others relate the valorous exploits and marvellous deeds of the mythological Gods and heroes like Rama, Siva, Krishna, Bheema and Hanuman. There are also folk songs that treat of the prosperity and abundance of certain places and regions. Some folk songs deal with the life of some unknown and forgotten poet or some obscure hero that did not enjoy sufficient limelight or the royal patronage of a king to some man of letters or the touching incident of a romance that grew between the radiant daughter of a chieftain and the adventurous son of one of his ministers. The folk songs sung during the '*Nalangu*' ceremony in marriages are both serious and comic in tone and content, containing useful maxims and recipes for the benefit of the married couple. They also invoke the blessings of various Gods upon the bride and the bridegroom. They also subject the parties to the marriage as well as their relatives and at times their ancestry to loving ridicule and flamboyant praise. One comes across some excellent folk songs during the enactment of farces and mythological pieces in the villages by persons well versed in them. These street performances are called '*Therukkoothus*'. Most of the therukkoothu performances are conducted during festival time. There are tragedies as well as comedies among them. Occasionally they touch a great height of emotion and administer to the audience a lesson in worldly wisdom or exhort the hearers to take to the path of righteousness. These folk songs are often couched in the crude language of the rustics though occasionally we come across a few that have a superior poetic flavour. Now-a-days these folk songs are gradually yielding place



A Catholic Church in *St.* Ioseph's Estate.



Kids at play.

to the songs of the motion picture. If this trend continues-and it is sure to continue-these folk songs may be completely blotted out from the minds of the people in the course of the coming one or two decades. It will indeed be a bit of tragedy since these folk songs have nowhere been laid down in script.

During festivals, we come across two interesting items of recreation. They are a sort of dances. One is '*Karaga Attam*' and the other is '*Kavadi Attam*'. In Karaga attam, a few small decorated metal vessels are placed one upon another and the dancer balances them on his head without the aid of his hands while he twists his body in all directions and dances in all postures. To one who sees it for the first time it is an extremely thrilling performance. It indeed requires a highly developed skill in the art of balancing. There are consummate dancers in this field some of whose performances are really breath-taking. But those that perform this Karaga attam in Sirumalai are only persons with ordinary and moderate skill. In Kavadi attam, a bow-like frame made of wood and bamboo splinters, decked with flowers and sacred articles is balanced on the shoulder by the performer. These dances are performed to the accompaniment of drummings and pipings, sometimes very furious and defiant, but ordinarily anybody including visitors from urban parts can appreciate and enjoy these performances.

Morality and social ethics

168. The villagers of Sirumalai are generally a piece-loving and industrious people. They are crude, hard-hearted, as a matter of fact and extremely persevering. Their chief problem is constantly to exploit Nature and in this, they are registering perceptible success with the passage of years. As has been repeatedly stressed before, they do not have much contact with the modern civilization and they seem to be miles and miles away from any kind of sophisticated knowledge. Even regarding their agriculture and plantation, modern knowledge has to be thrust upon them. This thick envelope of ignorance inevitably made them a good deal innocent also. With all their burdens and hardships of daily existence, they manage a smile on their face and display a sweetness of temper. They possess a hospitable nature and one always likes to enjoy the warmth of their company. We come across many among them who are meticulously polite with new visitors to the village and take every care to see that they are duly obliged and their errands satisfactorily fulfilled.

Usually in villages, the pressure of social discipline is more marked than in urban towns; particularly in backward villages, we see the evidence of it almost at every turn. Social norms and conventions and caste regulations are rigorously observed and any departure from them brings on the offender the emphatic condemnation of the community. Sometimes even very slight transgressions get into the full glare of public notice and the offending individuals are shunned and held in great contempt. There is a sediment of ancient culture which may now be dwindling, but which can never be destroyed. Consequently there is great regard for elders among the youngsters, there is filial docility towards parents on the part of children and a general hatred of all manner of sexual vulgarity. As has been touched upon already, religion has made a deep inroad into their lives for generations and religious practices are sometimes most scrupulously observed even amidst harrowing poverty. Some of the village deities are embodiments of terrible ferocity and the poor villagers dread their Gods as they would be fury of an element.

169. The villagers do not display any serious criminal tendencies in the legal sense, though their nature is generally a *mixture of violence and softness. Of* course, there are some black patches in the annals of the village, but we need not make much of them. The crime statistics in respect of the village for the past one decade, given in the form of a tabular statement overleaf would give a clear enough idea of the position.

Most of the cases are not reported to the Police and are settled by the villagers themselves. Among the crimes tabulated here, cases of theft seem to stand out though they are not even half as many as we find in some of the backward villages. We have to look at the whole matter with a pinch of charity. The generality of the villagers are steeped in the morase of poverty and with quite a number of them, daily bread is a daily problem. If the rains do not come and the sky disappoints, quite a number of people are on the brink of starvation and one square meal a day become a rarity. But nature does not seem to have ever treated them too very hard and the village has never seen famine conditions. Those that are driven to commit theft do it despite themselves and it is usually resorted to by those who perennially face the disma prospect of starvation. Usually they steel plantations or lemon and hurry to the plains with their ill-begotten board to sell them away at whatever price they may fetch.

Prohibition cases are reported as 'NIL' for quite a a number of years. But this does not mean that drink is something like a taboo with the villagers. Quite a few of them are confirmed drink addicts and they indulge heavily in drinks. But the arm of law does not easily reach them and most cases go undetected. There is no Police Station in the village and it is the most difficult exercises for the police to go at frequent intervals to the village and keep a continuous watch. Even then, it would be difficult for the police to catch them redhanded since these people of the mountains are fleet-footed and can easily dupe the police. They really partake of the strength of the hardihood of the mountains in whose laps they move, breathe and have their being.

Nature of crime	Crime statistics, 1950–1960										
	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Theft	5	3	6	...	2	1	1	...	5	1	2
Hurt cases	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	2	...	1
Robbery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
Arms act	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	...	3	...
Prohibition	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...	...
Mischief cases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Murder	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	...

Social awareness

170. There is nothing like collective consciousness or social awareness among the villagers. In fact, every villager is a strong individualist, and with a minimum participation in communal activities, always minds his own business. This is mostly to be attributed to the high prevalence of illiteracy and absence of any manner of contact with the civilized trends. Investigation reveals that among 418 households, only 32 households are in the habit of reading newspaper. Only eighteen households have a sort of vague interest in social uplifit. The villagers do not even participate very vigorously or enthusiastically in politics which is the rage in most of the villages in the plains, and in many villages in the hills. But still it cannot be said that the villagers of Sirumalai are not interested in politics. It is one of the secondary pre-occupations for a number of youngsters and a few elders. The Congress Party and the D.M.K. have members as well as sympathizers among the people here. No sensational political activity has ever been noticed in this village. It is said that even during General Election, the atmosphere is not marked by any excessive enthusiasm or emotional display. Barring a few exceptions, most villagers are apathetic to politics and it would seem difficult to provoke in them at any time any fierce exhibition of political feeling. Of course, it would be unsafe for us to predict with any measure of assurance that things would not change. But still, keeping the present conditions in view, we can hazard the statement that it will take long for the people to take a sustained and lively interest in politics. The members of the local Panchayat seem to know something about the political activities that take place in the State and in the country, and they discuss with some animation and gusto about political events and their practical consequences. But here too, we often see vulgarisation of politics.

Table No. XXX

General

Caste/ Community	Total No. of households	No. of households: Reading daily newspaper	Member or members of which work for social uplift	Member or members of which take active part in politics	Member or members of which have joined Co-operative Societies
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Vellalar	124	13	7	5	22
Chakkiliar	102	4	2	...	15
Naidu	76	8	6	3	10
Konar	17	...	...	...	1
Valaiyar	13	...	...	...	1
Nadar	11	...	...	...	...
Pallan	7	...	...	...	...
Naicker	6	1	...	...	2
Gounder	4	...	...	...	...
Chettiar	3	...	...	...	...
Asari	2	...	...	...	...
Parayan	2	...	...	...	...
Kuravar	2	...	...	...	...
Pandaram	2	...	...	...	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...	...	...	...
Brahmin	1	1	...	...	...
Oddar	1	...	...	...	...
Pandithar	1	...	...	...	...
Maravar	1	...	...	...	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...	...	...	...
Christian	32	6	3	4	2
Muslim (Rowther)	7	...	...	...	1

The Co-operative movement is gradually progressing under favourable auguries and is slowly bringing within its fold more and more households. As it is, there are now 52 households covered by it. Since it is of appreciable economic advantage to them, and since it assures them at least an occasional financial relief, the people are beginning to show some sensible interest in the movement. Sooner or later, it is sure to take in its ambit the entire village and it may prove a rallying point for these poor and helpless villagers to organise themselves for other manifold activities for social and economic betterment. The following table will provide a fair idea of its strength and working.

Table No. XXXI

Co-operative society

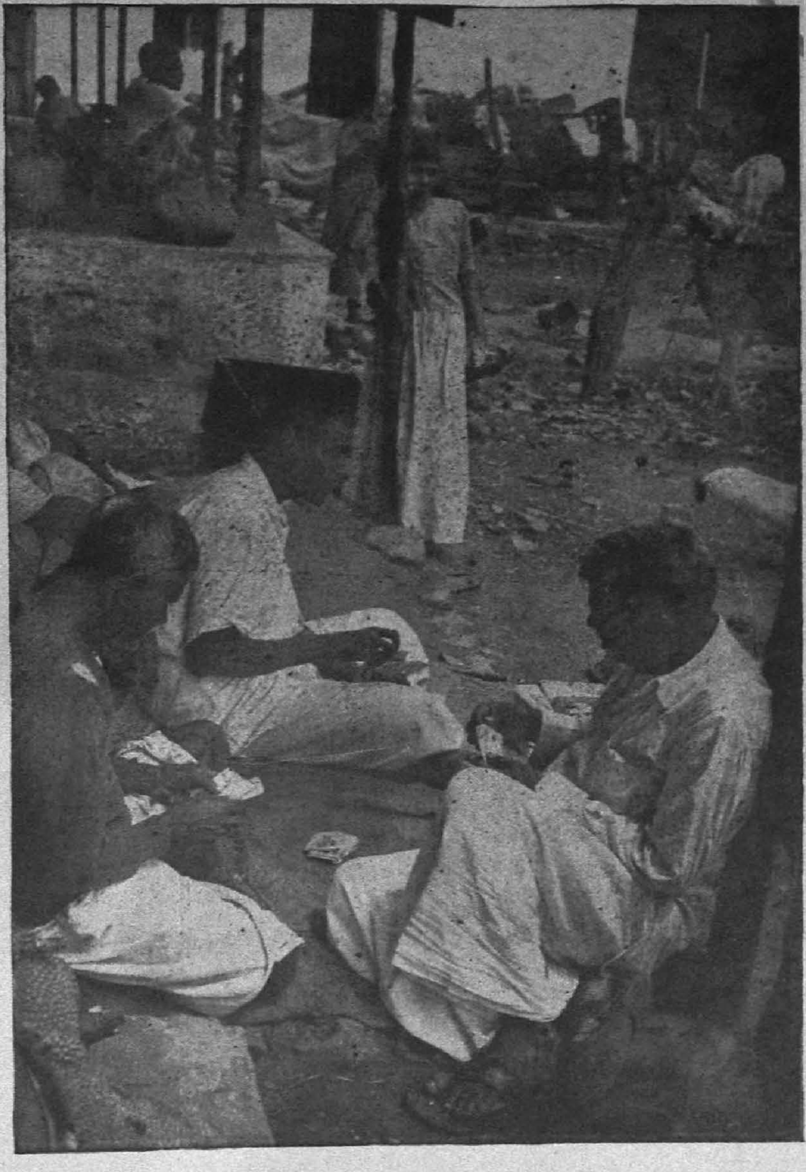
Caste/ Community	Total number of households	Number of households joining the Multipurpose Co-operative Society
(1)	(2)	(3)
Vellalar	124	22
Chakkiliar	102	15
Naidu	76	10
Konar	17	...
Valaiyar	13	...
Nadar	11	...
Pallan	7	...
Naicker	6	2
Gounder	4	...
Chettiar	3	...
Asari	2	...
Parayan	2	...
Kuravar	2	...
Pandaram	2	...
Agamudaiyar	1	...
Brahmin	1	...
Oddar	1	...
Pandithar	1	...
Maravar	1	...
Piramalaikallan	1	...
Christian	32	2
Muslim (Rowther)	7	1
„ (Pattani)	2	—
Total	418	52

There are two Co-operative Societies in the village, viz., Sirumalai Co-operative Multi-purpose Society and the Gandhipuram Co-operative Multi-purpose society. The latter is located at Chakkiliapatti. Extending credit facilities, primarily for purposes of land improvement and land reclamation are its main activities. The former Society was established in 1949, but it was in a dormant state for nearly eight years. In 1960, thanks to the efforts of some public-spirited villagers, new life was injected into the Society and it was galvanized into action. Its membership has increased from 104 in 1949 to 259 in 1964. The Society's land disbursements are in the order of Rs. 44.000 and odd till the financial year ending 1964. Of this, the short-term loans alone amount to Rs. 36,398. A member of the Vellala community is now the President of the Society. *He is an energetic young man with some amount of* social awareness and he is showing good promise. There are signs that he is taking the Society on fruitful and progressive lines and his associates seem to ungrudgingly offer him a helping hand. The Society convenes its general body meeting twice a year.

The Chakkilians have a Society of their own, started a few years ago. It has been already mentioned. It is by and large a Credit Society, and a few loans have been granted to petty land owners among Chakkilians on the security of their property. The Society, though of modest and humble dimensions, seems to be discharging its functions with some semblance of success. A Co-operative Society for Chakkilians, by Chakkilians and through Chakkilians is something rare. As years go by, it is likely to prove of considerable economic advantage to these helpless and downtrodden people and create among them some cohesiveness, social solidarity and collective consciousness.

Other public Institutions

171. Sirumalai has other important developmental agencies such as Mathar Sangam, Social Education Centre and Community Recreation Centre. The activities of the Mathar Sangam are not worth speaking of though a handful of ladies seem to evince occasional interest. It is five years old, but its record of progress is next to nothing except for two sewing machines that have been donated to it by the Panchayat Union. The Mathar Sangam *is a declining institution as far as* our knowledge goes. It is possible that before it dies a natural death, some enterprising women may come forward to impart a new energy to it and steer it along healthy lines.



Playing cards is the usual recreation for men - folk.

The Social Education Centre at Pudur hamlet.

Village Panchayat

172. The Village Panchayat of Sirumalai came into being during the later part of the year 1958. It is a minor Panchayat. It covers the entire revenue village which has been divided into three blocks, each hamlet being treated as a separate block. The total number of members of the Panchayat is nine including the co-opted lady member from the Pillai community. The Panchayat Office is functioning in a small but compact building at Pazhaiya Ur. It is not a poor and mean structure as in the case of some backward interior villages in the plains. There is considerable evidence to show that the Panchayat is gradually providing a rallying point for the villagers to ventilate their grievances and press for more and more amenities. But unless the entire village becomes conscious of the fact that Panchayat is the agency constituted to promote their welfare, the Panchayat cannot embark upon more useful and constructive activities. In some way or other, the Panchayat seems to be doing its best to dispel ignorance and generate civic consciousness among the villagers. The people seem to reciprocate, but in a rather tepid way. The financial position of the Panchayat is fairly satisfactory. The income from house tax amounts to about Rs. 1,800 per month. The major income comes from Stamp Duty surcharge which amounts to Rs. 3,750 per month on an average. This is subject to wide variance at times. Some amount is also realised from tax on vehicles, which is levied at the rate of Re. 1 per trip on the vehicles that ply between Sirumalai and Dindigul. A small weekly market assembles every Friday in the village and this also yields a little income. The following table would give an idea of the income and expenditure of the Panchayat under various heads. The figures relate to the year 1963–64.

Income	Rs. nP.	Expenditure	Rs. nP.
By cash	11,729·91	Establishment	180·00
Local cess	509·60	Contingency expenditure	219·84
House-tax	1,812·66	Maintenance road	138·75
Matching grant	370·00	Lights	96·87
Profession-tax	30·00	Contribution for school building	3,000·00
Library cess	5·40	Montessory School	30·00
Stamp Duty Surcharge	3,731·86	Library cess	12·54
Other expenses	126·99	Books for reading room	200·00
Refund (Montessory School)	112·16	Radio	132·87
Market	114·43	Sweeper	895·00
Bus stand	747·50	Contingent	100·43
Licence fees	147·17	Advance	90·00
Panchayat President advance	15·68	Presidents advance	15·68
Deposit advance	70·00	By cash	81·23
		Union Treasury	14,330·15
Total	19,523·36	Total	19,523·36

The Panchayat has made a good showing in the matter of providing amenities to the village. Considering the size of the village and its backwardness, its record of activities is not poor though it may not be spectacular. The Panchayat has undertaken the construction of two drinking water wells, a school building, the Panchayat building, construction of road, etc., within the span of the past seven years. It has helped the people to obtain loans for the development of cattle, poultry and agriculture. It has also a proposal to construct an overhead tank for the supply of drinking water to the villagers. The Panchayat seems to be nursing many more ambitious programmes, but if they are to be realised, it is essential that the villagers are enlightened from time to time by the Panchayat on the usefulness of the projects and the value of collective effort. It is seen that there is already some good leader-ship in the embryonic stage. The Panchayat, as it is, seems to have a core of strength and a noticeable degree of energy. A sense of mission also is not wanting. We can expect that it will not fail the villagers.

Community development

173. Sirumalai comes under the Dindigul Panchayat Union, the office of which is situated at Dindigul. Quite a few villagers are well acquainted with this office. The Panchayat Union is trying to spearhead a variety of constructive activities in the village of Sirumalai through the Village Panchayat. The school building at Pudur was constructed with the financial aid of the Panchayat Union. For the two drinking water wells also, the Panchayat Union has provided substantial monetary contribution.

Under the auspices of the Social Education Centre, the Panchayat Union has made some arrangments for adult education. There are two adult schools, one at Pazhayia Ur and the other at Pudur. But again it has to be stated that these two adult schools are languishing. Another school for infants known as Montessori School has been started where about thirty children have been accommodated. If the public response improves, this institution is sure to make a good show.

A Maternity Centre has also been opened to look after mothers and children. The maternity assistant assists the mother during pre-natal and post-natal period. From the proofs available, we can say that the Maternity Centre is performing its duties with commendable promptitude. This centre is also in charge of the CARE milk powder supplied by the Panchayat Union for the children. The Panchayat Union has also been granting loans to planters for land improvement, and so far loans to the tune of Rs. 20,000 have been granted. Two breeding bulls have also been supplied to the villagers at half cost.

The Panchayat Union also propose to have two Banana Demonstration Plants. It is taking a lot of interest in poultry development and fifty white leghorn birds have been supplied to the villagers and a subsidy of Rs. 100 has been granted to several households. Preventive inoculation and vaccination are given periodically to the birds when outbreak of any disease among them is anticipated. The Panchayat Union has also supplied a radio for the Panchayat which is installed at Pazhayia Ur hamlet. Towards Family Planning, a start has been made with the distribution of preventive tablets. Contraceptive medicines have been distributed to twenty households.

The Panchayat Union can do a good deal more to the village if there are facilities for easy access to the village. The laying of a good metalled road is, therefore, a matter of imperative urgency. When that comes, everything else is sure to follow automatically. Even now the Panchayat Union handles with utmost sympathy all the problems relating to the improvement of Sirumalai village. The officials of the Rural Development and Revenue Departments are doing their best against heaviest odds to ameliorate the conditions of the village and its populace. In another five years, we may expect things to change for the better in quite an apperciable degree.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

We have now come to the end of the report. It is a stimulating experience to go to the village Sirumalai and meet the simple innocent folk living there. The uphill trip in a jeep to Sirumalai is a piece of minor expedition. After reaching the village, we feel that we have come into a new atmosphere and we feel that Time has travelled back and we are sensing out-moded times and by-gone centuries. The villagers look at the new visitors with a slight bewilderment and a nervous smile. If you draw level with them, their shyness soon drops out and they begin to feel at home with you. A lively talk with laughter and fun now follows. The villagers like everybody that goes to study them, understand their plight and fathom their minds. The villagers take the visitors round and show to them the squalor and poverty in which they live. There is an explanation of grievances and hardships on one side and expression of sympathy and suggestion of remedies on the other side.

The villagers of Sirumalai are conscious of their enormous backwardness. They are now developing an urge to ameliorate their conditions and catch up with modern trends. A new leadership of a promising nature is gradually emerging into notice. The winds of change that never reached Sirumalai till now are now beginning to blow slowly over its surface. The chief handicap for progress is the lack of communication facilities. It is the duty of the Government to provide them as early as possible.

The villagers of Sirumalai are not an aggressive lot. They are an endearing people with plenty of native goodness. Indolence is alien to their nature. They have got the will and energy to work. They are capable of prolonged exertion on the soil. They are successful exploiters of Nature. It is in the interests of civilization to redeem such people to decent living and put them on the track of modern progress. It is not difficult to win them to new ideas. It is not difficult to harness them to constructive endeavours. It is not difficult to generate among them a collective consciousness. It is not difficult to make them co-operate with the officials. They are a meek and docile people. We can tap the immense moral energy that is lying dormant in them. Behind their crude exterior, they have an exceeding abundance of elemental innocence. They are anxiously looking for help and guidance. They have nothing but regard for us and we should have nothing but good wishes for them.

APPENDIX I

CENSUS 1961—SOCIO ECONOMIC SURVEY

Household Schedule

Name of village: House number: Serial number:

1. Person or persons interviewed: ...
2. (*a*) Name of the head of the household: ...
   (*b*) Sex: ...
   (*c*) Age: ...
3. Statement ...

Name	Relationship to head of household	Religion	Sex	Age	Marital status	Age at marriage	Literary	Primary occupation	Monthly income	Secondary occupation	Monthly income	Tertiary occupation monthly income	Activity, if not working	Is the occupation traditional or not?

A. DURATION OF RESIDENCE:

4. (*a*) For how many generations, counting from head of the household backwards, has the household been residing in this village?

(*b*) If the head of household has migrated to this village, together with the household, where was his ancestral home?

(*c*) Specify taluk, district and state

B. RELIGION:

5. (*a*) Religion:

(*b*) Sect:

(*c*) Tribe or Caste:

(*d*) Sub-tribe or sub-caste:

6. (*a*) Is there a diety or object of worship or a sacred plant in the house? (Answer Yes/No.)

(*b*) If 'Yes', where is the deity or object of worship located in the house?

(*c*) What is the name of the diety or object of worship or sacred plant and what is the form of worship?

(*d*) Other than this, what is the principal deity of the household?

7. Do you know that untouchability in any form has been prohibited under Law? (Answer Yes/No.)

C. MARRIAGE:

8. (*a*) (1) Has any marriage in contravention of caste or tribal law taken place in this household? (Answer Yes/No.)

(2) If such a marriage has taken place, give details about the marriage.

(*b*) With what castes or tribes other than the caste or tribe of the household is marriage

(1) Permissible.

(2) Desirable.

(c) Was dowry given on the occasion of the marriage of the son ? (Answer Yes/No.) If 'Yes', mention amount—cash and kind.

(d) Was dowry given on the occasion of the marriage of the daughter ? (Answer Yes/No.) If 'Yes', mention amount.

(e) Are you aware of the fact that the taking of dowry has been prohibited according to a recent piece of legislation ?

9. Have you any objection to contract marriages for persons of your household with persons of same social and economic status as yours but belonging to the following communities ? [Mark with a (✓) the names of the communities against which you have no objection. (Communities to be listed in the village) :

D. INHERITANCE :

10. (a) Do you know that there have been changes in recent years in Hindu Adoption Act ? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'Yes', what do you think are the salient features of recent changes ? (List of salient features to be prepared.)

11. (a) Do you think that there have been changes in recent years in Hindu Succession Act ? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'Yes', what do you think are the salient features of such changes ? (List of salient features to be prepared.)

12. (a) What relatives including male members and widows and daughters, married and unmarried, inherit property on the death of a married male person belonging to the same caste as your household ?

(b) What is the share of each such member ?

13. Are you in favour of inheritance of property by daughters equally with sons ?

E. PROPERTY :

Land

14. If the household possesses land, fill up the following :—

(a) (1) Own lands.

(2) Land held direct from Government under tenure less substantial than ownership.

(3) Land held from private persons or institutions.

(4) Land given out to private persons or institutions.

(5) Land held on lease.

(6) Others.

Total

(b) Total area under cultivation :

(c) Area comprising homestead :

(d) *Name of crop*	*Quantity obtained last year*	*Quantity consumed*	*Quantity sold*
(i) Paddy			
(ii) Wheat			
(iii) Cholam, Ragi, Cumbu			
(iv) Pulses including gram			
(v) Sugarcane			
(vi) Barley			
(vii) Vegétable			
(viii) Jute			
(ix) Chillies			
(x) Tobacco			
(xi) Oil seeds			
(xii) Cotton			
(xiii) Ginger			
(xiv) Fodder or bamboo or cane			
(xv) Fruits			
(xvi) Other agricultural crops (Maize, Jowar, Bajra, etc.)			

(e) What is the organic manure used?

(f) Do you use chemical fertilisers?

(g) Do you use any new agricultural implement which has been taught to you for the first time in the last five years?

(*h*) Do you borrow agricultural implements from others at the time of cultivation?

(*i*) Do you take help of neighbours at the time of sowing or harvesting?

(*j*) Do you assist your neighbours and receive help at the time of cultivation in the shape of manual labour?

15. How much did your father own at the time of his death?

(*a*) Land in acres.

(*b*) Houses and other property.

16. (*a*) Do you own any cattle or poultry? Give numbers.

(i) Milch cattle.

(ii) Draught bullock.

(iii) Cows, goats, sheep, pigs, duck/geese, fowl and buffaloes.

(*b*) How much milk or milk products do you sell?

17. *Fishery*

(*a*) Does the household own any tank?

(*b*) If fish is reared, was any quantity sold last year? (Answer Yes/No. If 'Yes', mention quantity.)

F. INDUSTRY:

18. Do you conduct any industry? If 'Yes', is it traditional?

(*a*) What are the products? Quantity produced and quantity sold last year.

(*b*) Which of them do you sell to neighbours or in the market?

(*c*) Have you taken up this industry for the first time in the course of the last five years?

(*d*) Have you adopted any new tools or instruments for running this industry? If so, name the details of the tools and instruments.

19. Name the art or craft in which you have earned proficiency.

20. When and how did you learn the art or craft concerned?

(a) Do you consider further training necessary? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'Yes', describe the type of training you desire.

21. (a) What was your father's occupation?

(b) If you have changed your father's occupation, why have you done so?

(c) Were you forced for lack of choice into this occupation? (Answer Yes/No.)

22. (a) Have you yourself changed your occupation from another kind to this one? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'Yes', explain why you have changed your own occupation?

(c) Are you content with the present occupation?

(d) If not, what other work are you doing?

23. (a) Are you content with the present occupation? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'No', what other work are you doing?

24. What kind of work would you like your son to do?

25. (a) If you are engaged in trade or business, mention the commodities dealt in.

(b) How do you get your finance?

(c) What is your approximate profit?

G. INDEBTEDNESS:

26. If head of household is in debt—

(a) Mention amount of debt outstanding.

(b) Is the household in debt? If 'Yes', fill up the following:

	Amount Rs. nP.
(a) *Cause*—	
1. Purchase of land.	
2. House construction or repairs to existing building.	

3. Marriages
4. Funerals.
5. To give dowry.
6. To clear outstanding debts.
7. Sickness.
8. Confinement.
9. Family day-to-day expenses.
10. Household cultivation.
11. Industry run by household.
12. Business run by household.
13. Festivals.
14. Others.

(*b*) *Source of debt*—	*Amount*	*Rate of interest*
1. Relatives.		
2. Friends or neighbours.		
3. Village money-lenders.		
4. Professional money-lenders from outside.		
5. Government institutions.		
6. Co-operative Credit Societies.		
7. Land Mortgage Banks.		
8. Other Co-operative Societies.		
9. Others (Specify).		

H. EDUCATION:

27. (*a*) How much did you spend last year on the education of your children?

(*b*) Does any member of the household regularly read a newspaper or listen to news broadcast?

I. COMMUNITY:

28. (*a*) Does the head of the household know headquarters of district, taluk, Panchayat Union Council and Block Development Office, location of the Police Station under the jurisdiction of which the village is?

(*b*) Does the head of the household know the names of the principal rivers flowing through the district?

APPLICABLE TO ZAMIN VILLAGERS AND THOSE RECENTLY SETTLED:

29. (*a*) Do you think that abolition of zamindary and intermediary rights has resulted in any good to you? (Answer Yes/No.)

(*b*) If 'Yes', indicate how you have benefited?

(*c*) If 'No', why have you not been benefited?

30. (*a*) Have you benefited from any scheme of land reclamation or land development or any other form of Land Reform? (Answer Yes/No.)

(*b*) If 'yes', explain how you have benefited.

31. (*a*) Is there a Co-operative Society in your village? If 'Yes', how many are there? If 'No', do you desire to have one?

(*b*) If 'Yes', are you a member? (Give the name of the society or societies.)

(c) If 'No', why are you not a member?

32. (*a*) Is your village covered by the Community Development Project?

(*b*) Do you know what are the functions of Grama Sevak? (Answer Yes/No)

(*c*) If 'Yes', describe his functions.

33. (*a*) Have you benefited from the Block Development Office? (Answer Yes/No.)

(*b*) If 'Yes', how have you benefited?

34. (*a*) Is there a Panchayat in your village? (Answer Yes/No.)

(*b*) Is 'Yes', how long has the Panchayat been in your village?

(*c*) What are the main functions of the Panchayat?

(*d*) What are the main parties in your Panchayat and which caste is leading the Panchayat?

(e) Has there been any improvement in your village since the Panchayat was established? (Answer Yes/No.)

(f) If 'Yes', what have been the improvements?

(g) Has there been any harm after its establishment? (Answer Yes/No.)

(h) If 'Yes', what were the evils?

35. (a) Has any caste or tribe of your village got a separate Panchayat of its own? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) If 'Yes', what are the main functions of this Caste or Tribal Panchayat?

(c) Since the Statutory Panchayats are functioning do you think these Caste or Tribal Panchayats should still continue? If 'Yes', why should they exist?

36. (a) Is there a Family Planning Centre in your area? (Answer Yes/No.)

(b) Do you know that man and wife can prevent conception of a child by deliberate means, if they wish to do so?

(c) Does the head of the household wish that no more children were born to him; or does he wish for more, or is he indifferent?

J. DIET:

37. (a) How many times a day do the members of the household take their meals? Are they vegetarians or non-vegetarians?

(b) What are the usual items of diet at each meal?

(Specify whether rice, wheat, grams, roots etc.)

(c) What are the foods or drinks prohibited?

(d) Does the household take sugar/tea or coffee?

K. UTENSILS:

38. (a) What utensils are used for preparing food and for storage of drinking water?

(*b*) Of what materials are important utensils made?

(1) Earthenware

(2) Aluminium

(3) Copper

(4) Brass

(5) Eversilver

(6) Silver

L. FUEL:

39. What fuel is ordinarily used for cooking?

40. How do they procure it ?

M. FURNITURE AND ORNAMENTS:

41. (*a*) Does the household possess a bedstead/chair/table/mirror/bench/local cot/wall-shelf/almirah/stool. (Cross out those not found.)

(*b*) Is the household using any new kind of furniture for the first time in the last five years ?

(*c*) If so, what are they?

(*d*) Does the household use mosquito nets?

42. List all the ornaments used by (*a*) men and (*b*) women. Give the local names and mention whether gold or silver or brass or any other material is mainly used. Give drawings.

N. HOUSES:

43. Give details about the house materials.

Roof—

(1) Mud roof.

(2) Country tiled.

(3) Mangalore tiled.

(4) Terraced (pucca roof).

(5) Zinc sheet.

(6) Tin roof.

(7) Asbestos roof.

(8) Corrugated iron roof.

(9) Wooden roof.

(10) Straw or grass roof.

(11) Leaf roof.

(12) Others.

Wall—

(1) Mud wall.

(2) Bamboo wattled wall.

(3) Mud plastered bamboo wattled wall.

(4) Wall of twigs and branches.

(5) Wall of twigs and branches plastered with mud.

(6) Reed wall.

(7) Mud plastered reed wall.

(8) Wooden wall.

(9) Brick wall.

(10) Straw or grass wall

(11) Leaf wall.

(12) Stone wall.

(13) Others.

Floor—

(1) Mud floor.

(2) Cement floor.

(3) Wooden floor.

(4) Stone floor.

(5) Lime and mortar floor.

Number of slopes—

One.

Two.

Three.

Four.

Five.

Six or more.

Without slopes.

44. (*a*) Give a plan of the house and compound showing the main places, the material of the roof, walls and doors.

(*b*) Total number of rooms in the house.
NOTE:—Give sketches and photographs wherever possible.

O. CONSUMER GOODS:

45. (1) (*a*) Does the household possess hurricane lantern / petromax or hazak / battery torchlight / kerosene stove / bicycle / gramaphone / radio-set? (Cross out those which do not apply).

(*b*) Has any of the items been acquired for the first time in the last five years? If 'Yes', which are these articles?

(*c*) Does the household use toilet soap/ washing soap ?

(*d*) Are clothes sent to washerman ?

POSSESSIONS

(2) Does the household possess—

(*a*) Car.

(*b*) Bullock cart.

(*c*) Jutka.

(*d*) Ponies.

46. (A) *Maternity cases:*

(1) Cases hospitalized.

(2) Number of cases.

(*a*) Confined in hospital.

(*b*) Confined by bringing doctor home.

(*c*) Confined by qualified midwife at home.

(*d*) Confined by unqualified 'Thai' at home.

(*e*) Confined without assistance.

(B) *Medical treatment*:

What is the medical system followed?

(1) Allopathic.

(2) Ayurvedic.

(3) Homeopathic.

(4) Combination of more than one of these.

(5) Others.

(C) *Medical consultation* :

Where do you go for medical consultation?

(1) Public hospitals or dispensaries.

(2) Private hospitals or dispensaries.

(3) Private doctors.

(*a*) Allopaths.

(*b*) Homeopaths.

(*c*) Others.

(D) *Vaccination*:

How many members of the family have been vaccinated?

(1) At least once.

(2) Within the past six months.

47. *Income*

Total family income per mensem from—

(*a*) Land.

(*b*) Industry.

(*c*) Business.

(*d*) Occupation.

(*e*) Others (Specify source).

48. *Average monthly expenditure* :

What is the expenditure on—

(*A*) *Food*:—

(1) *Cereals and pulses*:—

(*a*) Rice.

(*b*) Other grains.

(*c*) Dhall.

(*d*) Total.

(2) *Vegetables*—

(*a*) Potatoes.

(*b*) Tapioca.

(*c*) Onions.

(*d*) Coconut.

(*e*) Others.

(*f*) Total.

(3) *Non-Vegetarian*:

(*a*) Meat.

(*b*) Fish.

(*c*) Egg.

(*d*) Others.

(4) *Milk*.

(5) *Ghee and oils*:

(*a*) Ghee.

(*b*) Oils.

(*c*) Total.

(6) *Condiments*:

(*a*) Chillies.

(*b*) Tamarind.

(*c*) Others.

(*d*) Total.

(7) *Sugar*:

(*a*) Sugar.

(*b*) Jaggery.

(*c*) Total.

(8) *Coffee and tea*:

(*a*) Coffee.

(*b*) Tea.

(*c*) Total.

(9) *Liquor*:

(10) *Tobacco*:

(*a*) Smoking.

(*b*) Chewing.

(*c*) Total.

(11) Other foods including refreshments.

Total under food:

(B) *Education*:

(1) Fees.

(2) Books.

(3) Uniform.

(4) Others.

(*C*) *Clothing*:

(*D*) *Fuel* :

(*E*) *Marriage*:

(*F*) *Festivals*:

(*G*) *Miscellaneous*:

(1) Dhoby or soap.

(2) Barber.

(3) Travelling.

(4) Medical fees and medicines.

(5) Religious observances.

(6) Amusements.

(7) Provident Fund and other compulsory savings.

(8) Payments of debts.

(9) Remittances to dependents residing elsewhere.

(*H*) *Others*:

Total

49. (*a*) Has the household secured during the last five years?

(1) Better irrigation facilities.

(2) Better types of cattle.

(3) Better seeds.

(4) Better implements.

(5) Better manure.

(6) More land for cultivation.

(7) Use of pesticides.

(8) Improved methods of cultivation like Japanese method.

(9) Land improvement measures like land reclamation, soil conservation and consolidation.

(*b*) Have you received demonstration in improved agricultural practices?

(*c*) Have you participated in activities of Community Project by contribution of land, labour, cash, or material?

50. *Prosperity Index*:—

(1) Have you cleared any debt which existed prior to ten years from the income of the household?

(2) If yes, specify the amount so cleared.

(3) During the last ten years—

(*a*) Have you acquired any property?

(*b*) Have you made any savings in cash or in the shape of ornaments, etc.?

(*c*) Have you invested capital in any new undertaking or building?

(*d*) Have you opened a voluntary account in any Post Office Savings Bank or any other bank?

(*e*) Have you invested in N. S. C. or Prize Bonds or other forms of rural saving campaigns?

(*f*) Are you a member of any chit fund or other indigenous funds except where it is wholly from any debt incurred for the purpose and/or the proceeds of any sale of property?

51. *Extra-curricular activities*—

Has any member or members of this household—

(*a*) Worked for social uplift.

(*b*) Taken active part in politics.

(*c*) Joined any Co-operative Society.

(*d*) Joined any club, library, dramatic party or other cultural organisation in the village.

SOCIAL DISABILITIES:

52. (A) Do you have free access to—

(1) Shop, hotel or restaurant

(2) Temple or place of worship.

(3) Any other place of public resort.

(B) Do the following render you their services—

(1) Brahmin priest.

(2) Barber.

(3) Washerman.

(4) Any other village servant.

(C) Are you avoided by Caste Hindus in regard to —

(1) Touch.

(2) Serving cooked food.

(3) Serving water.

APPENDIX II

CENSUS 1961 — SOCIO ECONOMIC SURVEY

Village Schedule

Name of Police Station/Taluk	Name of District.
Name of village :	L. C. No. of village.
Area of the village :	No. of Households.

What is the religion which majority of the villagers profess ?

Name the caste to which the majority of the villagers belong.

---

1. Topography of the village :

   (*a*) Is the village situated on a plain/on an undulating surface/on a plateau/on a hillock/or at the bottom of a depression ?

   (*b*) The system of grouping of houses — average distance between two clusters of houses—reasons for such grouping e. g., whether on account of the nature of the surface of land or on account of the social customs.

   (*c*) Internal roads—Tanks—Village common—any stream or other extensive source of water – proximity or otherwise of any jungle – Approximate number of shade-bearing trees and how they are arranged.

2. What is the local legend about the village ?

3. Detailed description of average house of the members of each caste/tribe, religious group, occupational group in the village.

4. Name and distance of Hat or Hats to which surplus produce of the village is taken for sale.

5. Name and distance of the nearest railway station and bus route.

6. Distance by road from Thana and sub-division headquarters.

7. (*a*) Distance of the Post Office from the village.
   (*b*) Distance of the Telegraph Office from the village.
   (*c*) Can money be sent through that Post Office?

8. Religious practice followed by members of each caste, tribe and religious group in the village. The description of the religious practice in each case should begin with the name or names under which the Supreme Being is known and then proceed from ceremonies that might be observed in respect of a person from sometime before he is born and end with the funeral rites after his death.

9. Give the details of places of common religious worship, if any.

10. Describe community festivals, if held in the village.

11. Dress commonly worn by the villagers with special reference to peculiarities on account of Caste, Tribe or religious sanction or economic status.

12. Number and types of schools in the village.

13. Describe Social Recreation Centres, if any.

14. State of Co-operative movement in the village. (Number and names of Co-operatives)

15-A. Details of crime statistics for the past ten years.

Year	Place of crime	No. and nature of crimes	Remarks

15-B. Prohibition Offences.

Year	Place of crime	Number	Remarks

16. Details of births and deaths for the last ten years.

Year	Month	Births		Deaths		Natural increase	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females

A brief note on the cause of death:

17. Details of village lands classified by crops:

Year	Name of crop	Extent of land

18. Total population of the village in 1931, 1941, 1951 and 1961.
19. Is the village electrified?
20. School statistics in detail.
21. What are the common diseases in the village?
22. Give your impression of cleanliness.
23. Drainage and sanitary facilities—A note.
24. What is the source of drinking water?
25. Is outbreak of epidemic frequent and what are the preventive and curative efforts taken to combat them?
26. Is there a Primary Health Centre or Maternity ward? Which is the nearest hospital?
27. Is widow remarriage allowed by different castes?
28. What are the sources of irrigation in the village? Give number and types and brief note thereon including the number of pumpsets.
29. Give the number of temples/mosques/churches in the village.
30. If there is any Co-operative Society in the village, give a detailed note on it.
31. Total livestock in the village as per the 1956 Census and the present position.
32. Is there a Key Village Centre in the village? If no, which is the nearest Veterinary Hospital?
33. Is there a Cattle Pound in the village?
34. Do the villagers tatoo their bodies?
35. Do they favour female education?
36. Are there any ancient monuments in the village? If yes, give a note on them.
37. Give the current proverbs in the village.
38. Give a note on the Panchayat.

Cultural life of the village

I	II	III			IV					V	VI	VII
Names of clubs, libraries, drama parties or other cultural organisations in the village.	When established	Rough proportion of members belonging to			Office bearers					Brief note on basis of membership subscription, sigining of pledge etc.	Brief note on objective of the organisation	Brief note on activities of the organisation
		Different castes	Different occupational groups	Age	Name	Caste	Occupation	Age	Education			

Village disputes referred to different authorities last year

I	II			III	IV	V	VI
Nature of adjudicating authority	Leading members of each disputant party			Nature of dispute	Decision of the adjudicating authority	Nature of Sanction	REMARKS : (Whether the decision was enforced, whether there is preference for adjudication by particular type of authority in particular type of case, place of trial etc.)
	Caste Panchayat	Name	Caste/Tribe				
Caste Panchayat							
Informal Panchayat							
Statutory Village Panchayat							
Court							
Others (Specify)							

Village leaders, Members of Panchayat, Priests and other office bearers

I	II								III
Name of Organisation	Members								Remarks
	Name	Caste	Occupation	Age	Since when holding the office	How gained position	Remunea tion, if any	Other offices held inside or outside the village	
Statutory Panchayat									
Caste Panchayat (Name of Caste)									
Other leaders									
Member of Board of Directors of Co-operative Society									

Recreational and artistic activities employed by the villagers

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII		VIII	IX
Type of activity	*Brief description	Where room placed (if outside the village, name & distance of the place)	Frequency & duration (specify whether daily, monthly, seasonal, etc.)	Extent of active participation of people of the main castes & communities in performance (Many, few, some)	Extent of participation of people of the main castes or communities as audience (Many, few, some)	If activity is in village, do visitors from other village participate?		What agency sponsors, promotes or finances	Who trains players, etc. (His name, address, caste, occupation)
						Approximate No.	Role player, audience otherwise		
1. Sports & Games									
2. Drama, Music, Dancing etc.									
3. Cinemas									
4. Films trip, Puppet show etc.									
5. Fairs									
6. Festivals									
7. Other entertainments									

*Indicate nature and reason of celebration.

APPENDIX III

Glossary of Local Terms

Sl. No.	*Local terms*		*English equivalents*
1.	Agathi	...	A tree whose leaves serve for pot herbs (*Coronilla grandiflora*)
2.	Agraharam	...	Settlement of Brahmins
3.	Appalam	...	A kind of thin cake made of gram flour
4.	Arasani	...	Decorated pots placed before marriage dais
5.	Ayah	...	Unqualified midwife
6.	Bogi Pandigai	...	A festival in honour of Indra celebrated on the Pongal eve
7.	Bhajanai Madam	...	Religious place where devotional hymns are sung and discourses are conducted
8.	Deeparadanai	...	Waving of lighted lamp before the deity
9.	Deepavali	...	A Hindu festival of lights celebrated in the month of November
10.	Dhakshinai	...	Customary gift
11.	Dhrishtimavu Vilakku	...	An offering of kneaded flour in the midst of which a little pit is made for ghee to burn
12.	Dosai	...	A delicacy made of rice flour
13.	Gothram	...	Exogamous groups in a caste
14.	Gramam	...	Village
15.	Homam	...	Burnt offering; casting of ghee, grain etc., into the sacred fire

Sl. No.	Local terms		English equivalents
16.	Idayan	...	Shepherd
17.	Idly	...	Steam cooked rice cake usually had for breakfast
18.	Kaman Pandigai	...	A festival conducted in honour of Kaman, the Indian cupid
19.	Karthigai Deepam	...	A festival of lights, celebrated in the Tamil month of Karthigai (November–December)
20.	Karungodi	...	A kind of creeper
21.	Kezha Adu	...	A kind of goat
22.	Kontharuval	...	A reaping hook, a sickle
23.	Koottu	...	A curry made of vegetables
24.	Kulam	...	Family, race, tribe, caste
25.	Kurinji	...	A hilly tract or country
26.	Manvetti	...	Spade
27.	Mattu Pongal	...	Festival celebrated for the sake of cattle
28.	Melam	...	Drum
29.	Mirasdar	...	A land lord
30.	Moharam	...	A Muslim festival
31.	Mulaippari	...	Tender seedlings grown in small containers and placed before marriage dais
32.	Nalangu	...	Ceremony performed to ward off the effects of evil eye
33.	Nathaswaram	...	A long musical wind pipe

Sl. No.	Local terms		English equivalents
34.	Nattanmaikkaran	...	Leader of a caste
35.	Nei Pantham	...	Torch
36.	Pallankuzhi	...	Indigenous indoor game played by women
37.	Pandhal	...	A temporary structure for shade or a decorated canopy over the marriage dais
38.	Paniyarams	...	Sweet cakes pastry
39.	Pavadai	...	Petticoat
40.	Payasam	...	Sweet porridge
41.	Poo mudippu	...	Floral decoration of a pregnant girl on her seventh month of conception
42.	Poonool	...	The sacred thread worn cross-wise over the shoulders by Brahmins
43.	Puttu	...	A kind of pastry cooked by steam
44.	Punniavachanam	...	A purificatory ceremony
45.	Rasam	...	Pepper water
46.	Sakthi	...	Strength; the female energy in creation (in Hindu Mythology); a name of Parvathi
47.	Sarkarai Pongal	...	A preparation of rice with sugar, ghee etc.
48.	Seer Varisai	...	Presents to a married girl, dowry
49.	Thai maman seer	...	Maternal uncle's presents to a married girl
50.	Thai Pongal	...	Harvest festival coming in mid-January
51.	Thali	...	Marriage badge which is tied to the bride's neck at the wedding

Sl. No.	*Local terms*		*English equivalents*
52.	Thayam	...	A kind of indigenous draught played by women
53.	Thippili	...	The long peper plant (*Piper longum*)
54.	Thiruvalluvar	...	The author of great Tamil work, " KURAL. "
55.	Ulunthu kazhi	...	Thick porridge made of rice and black gram
56.	Uppuma	..	An edible prepared out of pulverised wheat
57.	Urmal kattuthal	...	Tying a piece of cloth round the head as head dress
58.	Vadai	...	A fried preparation made out of black gram or dhal
59.	Valai kappu	...	A ceremony of bedecking a pregnant girl with bangles of gold, silver or glass
60.	Vatteluthu	...	Inscription—An ancient mode of Tamil writing
61.	Ven Pongal	...	Ven : White. White cooked raw rice mixed with grams and spices
62.	Vidyarambam	...	The ceremony of initiating the child into learning.

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